

A CELESTIAL NEW YEAR'S DAY.

BY PROF. SEBANOS D. PATRIE.

It has been my good fortune to be a spectator of, and in a measure a partaker in, the festivities incidental to New Year's Day in various parts of the globe—to wit, Germany, France, America and China; but for thoroughly entering into its spirit commend me to the inhabitants of the latter. It is, however, somewhat paradoxical to associate the festivities which obtain in China with New Year's Day, as they differ from those of other countries in being held on different dates—frequently in January, more often in February, and occasionally in March; and thus partake more of the nature of a movable feast.

In some points the holiday resembles our Christmas Day. Friends separated by long distances are invited; relatives make strenuous efforts to partake of each other's hospitality; presents, consisting of tea, silk, edibles and bouquets are made; mutual congratulations are tendered, and a general air of good fellowship prevails.

Upon the occurrence of New Year's Day, the Celestial government, through its organ, announces that from, say, the 20th of the 12th Moon the offices will be closed for four weeks, thus enabling the employes to enjoy a month's holiday. During this period "those under heaven" make the most of the time, and, as far as this world's goods will permit, keep up a succession of feasts and rejoicings.

Before indulging in earthly pleasures, the Chinese deem it necessary to propitiate their household gods by rigidly performing various rites of a domestic nature—such as "sweeping their hearths"—which they look upon as honoring their deities; and on the eve of the New Year invariably indulge in a bath of what may be termed sweet water, as it is highly scented and fragrant; and, as the midnight hour draws near, don their most gorgeous apparel, and prostrate themselves before Heaven and Ko-tou. Being of a very ritualistic turn of mind, the

altars are brilliantly illuminated, incense and gold and silver paper burnt; and, to heighten the effect, crackers are constantly let off. These ceremonies last till daylight, when the interchange of visits and the decoration of the houses are commenced, each striving to outdo his neighbor in embellishments. I cannot say much for the artistic merit, from an Englishman's point of view; but probably the inhabitant would think my ideas barbaric. The decorations consist principally of inscriptions hung in every conceivable place on the exterior and in the interior of the house, and also suspended on long poles or masts outside the premises. These inscriptions, as a rule, are in the form of proverbs, such as "To be happy I must be just;" others containing requests of not too modest a kind, as "May I be so *learned as to bear in my memory the substance of three million novels.*" What a book of reference that Chinaman would make were his wish gratified!

These sentences are written on various-colored papers, showing what loss, if any, the family have sustained, the degree of mourning being denoted by white, blue, pale red and scarlet.

Flowers are also used extensively in the decorations; scarcely a house can be passed without floral designs meeting the eye. Although New Year's Day is a general holiday, yet in a walk through a Chinese city scarcely a pedestrian is to be seen, unless it be some gaily-dressed servant speeding to acquaint Mrs. Twang-Chow, by means of a small pink card, that Mrs. Chow-Twang will do herself the inestimable pleasure of paying her a visit. Were it not for this occasional sign of life, one would imagine one's self in Goldsmith's deserted village, or fancy some fearful calamity had suddenly overtaken the inhabitants, or that one were in a city of the dead.

The shops are all closed, private house doors bolted, the touters, portable cook-shops, beggars, street itinerants, quacks and vendors of the celebrated razor paste for the million have disappeared. Even for the day that common object of the Chinese street, the little dirty street arab, is not seen; he, for once, is being treated like a human being, and taken from the mud into some hospitable house and feasted on the best.

Every one on New Year's Day seems to have commenced a new life. Even the saucy boat girls, who are at all times only

too ready to crack a joke or give an incisive repartee—often of a questionable nature—are on their dignity, and must not be addressed in a flippant manner, "coming down" on one rather severely if one happens to be ignorant of the habits and behaviour appertaining to the day in question. Although, as I have before remarked, this is a day of general feasting, yet it bears most favorable comparison with civilized countries, or, we will say, Christian England. We see no drunkenness in the streets; and, moreover, whether the class be rich or poor, the indoor behaviour is of the utmost decorum, the amusements being rational in the extreme; no ribald song or jest is to be heard, or excessive drinking indulged in, each endeavoring to outvie his neighbor in correct behaviour. Again I could not help contrasting this with our Western mode of enjoying a holiday. In every respect the host is most punctilious, making no distinction as to the quality of his guests, but seeing that each one is properly attended to, and personally serving first one and then another with some dainty morsel with the chopsticks he has himself just used, and pledging them to drink, each guest being provided with a diminutive china cup, capable of holding about a tablespoonful. When all the cups are charged, at a given signal from the host, each guest raises his cup to his head, as a pledge, and then drinks the contents, or merely holds the cup to his lips during the time of drinking by the rest—as an ancient writer remarks, "For if the outward ceremonies are observed and kept, it is all one to them whether you drink or not." At the conclusion of the feast, theatrical performances, gambling and the inevitable opium smoking are indulged in—these forms of dissipation extending over three days.

The Chinese are great lovers of pyrotechnic displays, and spend immense sums of money in fireworks during the holiday-making season, which attains its culminating point on the "Feast of Lanterns," one of the most scrupulously observed of festivals, and the one which, for gorgeousness in the matter of decorations, and displays of illuminated lanterns of every conceivable size and shape, surpasses all others.

Every house, howsoever humble, boasts of its lanterns, and in many cases its inmates have screwed and pinched to give a fitting display for a Celestial New Year, the greatest day in their calendar.

A CHARM FOR MIDSUMMER EVE.

BY MISS ELLIS CLARE.

Time—six o'clock on a midsummer eve about ten years ago; scene—a bowery, old-fashioned garden sloping to a river; *dramatis personæ*—a young man of two or three and twenty, who looks a gentleman in spite of a very shabby coat, and who carries a letter of recommendation from nature in his honest sunny blue eyes and sweet-tempered mouth, and a girl of seventeen, with untidy golden-brown hair, hanging in a tangle of wayward little curls over her forehead, pretty, petulant lips, and brown eyes which can look very saucy on occasion, though at this moment all their wilful brightness is drowned in tears.

The river is the Thames at Fulham; the bowery garden appertains to Riverside House, the summer residence of Cuthbert Mordon, Esquire, of the well-known private banking firm of Mordon & Grant. It is Cuthbert Mordon's daughter who is now sobbing disconsolately on the shoulder of the young fellow in the shabby coat—her cousin and lover Frank, who, happening un-

fortunately to have pockets as light as his heart is heavy just now, is forced to sally forth into the world and fill them before he can claim the little dimpled hand now clinging to his coat-sleeve. "Hence these tears."

"Don't cry so, pet—don't, for my sake. My courage would stand fire, I hope, but it won't stand water, darling, in the shape of your tears. I feel it dissolving fast."

"You cannot be really sorry to leave me, or you could not jo—joke about it," sobs Miss Mordon.

"Look into my eyes, Cathie, and say that again if you can. There may be light words on the lips, dear, when the heart is full."

"Well, of course you are a little sorry; it would be strange if you were not after all the years we have known and loved each other," says Cathie, pathetically. "But—"

"Ay, and more than a little," Frank interrupts, with a sigh. "Life has never looked much darker to me than it does at this moment, I can tell you, Cathie; but I

dare not give way to vain sorrow and regret—I want all my firmness for the battle before me. I am riding out into the wide world to seek my fortune, like the hero of a fairy-tale, and there is many a danger to be braved, many a giant to be slain, before the talisman can be won which will give me the ‘enchanted princess.’”

“Yes, it is all very well for you,” returns the princess, with a slight pout. “You will have no time to regret and remember while you are fighting giants and all that; but I shall have nothing else to do all day long. In these cases it is always harder for the one who stays than for the one who goes,” says seventeen-year-old Cathie, with a melancholy shake of the head, speaking out of the depths of her sad experience of life.

“And hasn’t the one who stays any giants to fight,” asked her cousin, bending to look into her eyes with an expression of half fun, half earnestness in his own—“giants of the sort that beset us all more or less, you know? Just think a moment, pussie.”

Cathie frowns at him, then flushes, and then her lips relax into a smile.

“Impertinent to the last! You had better tell me what they are—my particular giants—that I may be on my guard against them,” she says.

“But if I did it is possible I might rouse one of them from his lair. No, I think I’ll leave you to find out. I don’t want to get a wiggling just now.”

“As if you would be likely to get one in the last few moments we have together!” returns Cathie, reproachfully. “Surely you don’t think so badly of me as that?” Then she pauses and sighs. “I know I’m one mass of faults,” she says, shaking her head over her own depravity. “To begin with, I have a horrid temper; and I am selfish to a degree, and worldly, and—O Frank, I can’t think what you can see in me to love!”

“There is no accounting for tastes,” replies Frank, calmly.

“I don’t know how it is,” Cathie proceeds; “when I am with you or papa, I feel quite good and amiable”—Frank coughs—“but with mamma”—her childish face sets and hardens as she speaks—“the ‘seamy side’ of my character always comes uppermost. We jar on each other; there is no real sympathy between us. I have always felt as if there were some intangible barrier between our hearts; and we have

been further apart than ever lately since she turned against you so cruelly. It is strange and miserable that it should be so—she, my own mother, and I her only child! But so it is; and it makes me feel so—so lonely; and when you are gone, Frank—”

She breaks down there, and can only cling to his arm, sobbing, with her tearful cheek against his sleeve. His own eyes are moist, and there is an uncomfortable choking in his throat which prevents him from uttering a word of consolation.

“O Frank,” she goes on, looking up, “is it not cruelly hard that, just because you happen to have too little money and I too much, we should be parted—we, who love each other so truly, who suit each other so well, who are always so happy together? And suppose that when you come back you should find me changed, grown hard and cold and worldly?”

“Suppose I should find you with a few extra fingers and toes? Cathie, don’t be a goose!”

“Ah, but you don’t know how easy such a change would be! You forget what my surroundings are; you forget what are the views of life and duty that are put before me to follow. And the atmosphere of home is so cold that sometimes I feel like the child in Andersen’s story who lived in the Snow Queen’s palace till his heart was frozen into a lump of ice. I wish you could give me a talisman to keep mine from freezing.”

“You have one already, darling; a pure, true, unselfish love is like an ever-burning lamp, which fills the heart that holds it with warmth and light.”

“That lamp will burn in my heart as long as I live,” she says, earnestly; “I will be true to you, Frank, come what may.”

“Be true to yourself—that is all I ask, Cathie. As long as you love me, let no influence, no persuasions, no considerations of expediency induce you to”—

The sentence is never finished, for just then a footstep sounds near them, and, looking up, they see Mrs. Mordon standing before them, her lips compressed and an angry light in her handsome cold dark eyes.

Frank drops his arm from Cathie’s waist, and murmurs a few rather incoherent words of greeting, to which his aunt deigns no reply. Keeping her eyes on his face she says deliberately,

“Until today, Frank, I have always be-

lieved that, whatever your faults might be, you were at least a gentleman."

He colors, but answers, quietly,

"I trust I have done nothing today to cause you to change your opinion, Aunt Louisa."

"Is it the action of a gentleman to lead a young girl—a mere child—"

"I was seventeen last birthday," interpolates Cathie, indignantly.

"Into direct disobedience to her parents?" pursues her mother.

"Papa never forbade my seeing Cousin Frank," Cathie interrupts again, her face flushed and defiant, her eyes flashing; "nor did you, mamma, till poor uncle died, and you found that, instead of being rich as you expected, Frank was—"

"Hush, Cathie!" he whispers.

"You have learnt your lesson well, I see," Mrs. Mordon says, looking at her daughter with cold displeasure; and then she turns to Frank again.

"Is it acting like a gentleman, I ask you, to persuade my daughter to meet you clandestinely?"

"It is a thing I should never do," he returns, coolly. "There was nothing clandestine in this meeting; my visit was to yourself and Uncle Cuthbert. We start for Liverpool—my mother and I—early tomorrow morning; I scudded down from Swansnest to say good-by to you all, and found Cathie in the garden."

"And I found her in your arms," adds Mrs. Mordon, dryly; but she seems relieved by the explanation. "So you are really going out at last?" she says, with a satisfaction she makes no attempt to conceal. "This Australian scheme has been so long talked of that I began to think it would end in talk."

"I am really going; at least, if I don't, I must forfeit my passage-money, which was paid a week ago. Come, Aunt Louie," he goes on, putting out his hand with a frank smile, "let's shake hands and be friends. You are going to get rid of me for an indefinite time; you can afford to be generous now."

"I have always been sincerely your friend, Frank," she replies, presenting him with two cool fingers—"too much your friend to encourage you in hopes which could never be realized; but, now that you have seen the folly of such dreams"—

"Stop a moment, please," Frank inter-

rupts, hastily. "I must not accept your friendship on false pretences. If by my foolish dreams you mean the hope I have of one day making Cathie my wife, you are mistaken in thinking I have relinquished it. I have never held it so firmly and felt it so dear as at the present moment. It is that hope, and that alone, which sends me out into the world now; it is that hope that will sustain me in the coming struggle; it is with that hope sooner or later I shall return. I have bound Cathie by no promise—she is free to change if she will; but I believe that, if she is true to her own heart, she will be true to me, and if, using your influence and authority, you induce her to be false to her heart, it will be at your peril."

"That sounds like a threat."

"No, Aunt Louisa, it is only a warning. I warn you that, if you do so, the ruin of two lives will be at your door. There is Uncle Cuthbert!"

He breaks off with a change of tone, and, before she can speak again, he leaves her side, and approaches Mr. Mordon, who has just returned from town, and is sauntering among his flower-beds in an old shooting-coat, with his hands in his pockets, smoking an ante-prandial cigar.

"Well, Frank, so we are to lose you, are we?" he says, in his pleasant languid voice, laying a hand on the young man's shoulder, while his face—a handsome, kindly face, with intellect in the eyes and forehead, but more than a suspicion of weakness in the mouth and chin—lights up for a moment with a smile which obliterates its lines of care.

"Not for long, I trust, sir; I hope soon to come back, rolling in wealth, and possessing a carriage-and-pair."

"Ah, yes—if fortunes were won as easily as they are lost!" returns the banker, flicking the ashes from his cigar. "Your plans seem to have been settled in rather a hurry at last?" he continues.

"Yes—I received a letter from Dean & Lewis last week, saying that, if I intended to accept the situation they offered me a month ago, I must be prepared to go out at once. I thought it best to accept it; it was no good waiting for something better to 'turn up,' like Mr. Micawber. It is an opening for me, you see—not a very spacious one perhaps," he adds, with rather a rueful laugh, "but large enough to admit the thin end of the wedge."

"An opening—yes," repeats Mr. Mordon, vaguely, looking down at the grass at his feet as though he sees the "opening" there in the shape of an actual gulf.

There are moments when, looking at a familiar face, it seems as if a veil falls from our eyes, and we see it as it appears to strangers; changes never hitherto noticed, though the face is before us every day and every hour, are revealed to us in a flash, as it were. Sometimes the revelation brings only a sort of incredulous wonder, sometimes it brings a spasm of dread, sometimes a pang of bitter self-reproach.

Such a flash of "clear sight" comes to Frank at this moment as he looks at his uncle's face. He notices for the first time how worn and aged it is, with the deep lines at the corners of the mouth, the upright furrows between the brows which tells of gnawing anxiety rather than sorrow, and a shadow in the eyes which no summer sunbeams can chase away.

"What has brought the shadow there?" Frank wonders, and he is still pondering it with a vague uneasiness when the other looks up again.

"And your mother goes with you?" he says. "It is unwise of her, surely? She cannot help being a hinderance to you in your new life. Why does she not remain at home—at least for the present?"

"She says it would not be home without me," Frank answers, with a smile. "She charged me with a farewell message to you, Uncle Cuthbert," he continues, dropping his voice so that it does not reach Mrs. Mordon's ears. "She bid me say that she knows that the estrangement which has arisen of late has not been your fault, and that she carries away none but grateful memories of your kindness."

"Poor Ellen! I fear my 'kindness' has not gone much further than letting her live rent-free at Swansnest, and for that Cathie must be thanked; the little place is hers. Perhaps you may have wondered, Frank," he goes on, with a shade of embarrassment in his manner, "that I have never offered you a place in our house?"

"Indeed sir, I have never," Frank begins, hurriedly, flushing with the consciousness that he has wondered very often.

"Well, if you have not, other people have," his uncle interrupts; "but the fact is it has been—there are circumstances which have rendered it"—He hesitates,

looking down again at the imaginary gulf at his feet. "I wish there was anything else I had it in my power to do for you," he adds, hastily, leaving his first sentence unfinished.

"There is one thing," Frank puts in quickly, glancing at Cathie. "You have it in your power to make me the happiest fellow living, Uncle Cuthbert, if you will only give your sanction to hopes which—to hopes that—in short"—He breaks down rather lamely, but, encouraged by the pressure of a little hand slipped stealthily into his own, begins again on a fresh tack. "You know how long we have loved each other, Cathie and I"—

"The attachment dates from the days when you were both in short frocks, I believe," remarks Mrs. Mordon, with dry satire.

"And all these years," he continues, ignoring the interruption, "it has been my dearest hope to make her my wife some day. When my poor father was living and prosperous, I know both you and Aunt Louisa wished it; of course everything is altered now. I cannot expect you to give her to me; I only beg that you will not use your influence against me while I am away, and that when I return"—

"When you return," interposes his aunt, "supposing that you are in a suitable position, and are still in the same mind as at present, we will consider the subject; but, while the future is so problematical, it seems to me waste of time to discuss it."

"Uncle Cuthbert, won't you give me a word of encouragement?" Frank pleads.

"Speak for yourself, papa," cries Cathie. "Let your heart speak for you; I know it is on our side."

Perhaps it is, and might prompt his answer if his wife's eyes were not fixed upon him with the cold steady look which always acts as a refrigerator to his warm impulses.

He smiles faintly, puts an arm about his daughter and draws her to his side, and, laying his other hand on Frank's shoulder, returns,

"When your carriage-and-pair draws up at the door, Frank, I will put Cathie in and throw an old shoe after you both; more than that I cannot promise at present. And now come in; the dressing-bell has just rung. You will dine with us of course?"

"Thanks; I wish I could, but I can't stay—I have a hundred things to do tonight."

May I take Cathie back with me, to say good-by to my mother? Thank you. Come, darling. Good-by, Aunt Louie; good-by, dear Uncle Cuthbert. When we meet again, I hope to claim the promise you have just given me."

"When we meet again?" repeats Mr. Mordon, with a sigh. "Ah, many things may happen before then, Frankie! Good-by, and Heaven speed you!"

"It was well for you that I happened to be present at that interesting interview," says Mrs. Mordon to her husband, as they walk towards the house, while Frank and Cathie float away together on the sunlit river, "otherwise you would probably have presented your nephew with your daughter as well as your blessing."

"I might do worse," he answers, moodily. She looks at him impatiently.

"Might do worse!" she repeats. "Yes, truly—you might give her to the first beggar you met in the street! A paltry clerk in a merchant's office—the son of a beggarly bankrupt!"

"Louisa, you are speaking of my brother."

The tone is so stern that it silences her for a moment.

"He died a beggar," she mutters—"everybody knows that."

"Beggared, but not dishonored—what a gulf lies between the two conditions!" he murmurs, as if speaking to himself rather than his companion. "The name he bequeathed to his son might be tarnished by misfortune; but it was free from the faintest stain of disgrace. It would be well for us all if we left our children no worse legacy."

His wife makes no answer; but an uneasy, perplexed expression comes into her eyes as she glances at his downcast face; and, as she follows him across the threshold of their home, she shivers with a sudden chill—presentiment of coming trouble.

Before another midsummer eve came round, Mrs. Mordon's presentiment was realized; but the "trouble" came in a darker shape than her gloomiest fears had pictured it.

In the shock of a great commercial panic which will long be remembered in Europe, the house of Mordon & Grant fell, involving many hundreds in its ruin, spolling many a life, and wrecking many a home.

And then it was discovered that, firmly as it had appeared to stand, its foundations had long been undermined, and that it had been "tottering to its fall" for years, though none but the principals had known of the hidden danger.

This unexpected discovery brought down on the partners' heads a storm of indignation from those who had been ruined by the failure; in the first shock of the disaster no reproaches were thought too bitter to heap upon the men whose imprudence, neglect, or incapacity had caused it.

The junior partner—an easy-going, apathetic, unemotional man—quietly retired to a safe haven abroad till the storm was over; but Cuthbert Mordon, too proud to fly, stayed, endured it uncomplainingly—and died beneath it.

The doctors called his complaint by a Latin name of four syllables; unscientific people spoke of it as "a broken heart."

All that remained to his wife and daughter out of the wreck of his fortune was some trifling "jetsam and flotsam" in the shape of articles of personal property; fortunately the little riverside house Swansnest had been securely settled upon Cathie, and thither she and her mother retreated, asking nothing of the world but oblivion, which it was quite ready to give them; and there the current of their lives ran on through sun and shade for four long years.

Once more it was midsummer eve.

A glorious day was waning to its golden close—a day which had been the very crown and climax of the sweet summer, flower-fragrant, sunshine-bright, musical with songs of birds, gay with the happiness of myriads of living things—summer's joyous children.

The lawn window of the little drawing-room at Swansnest stood open to admit such languid breezes as were abroad on this sultry afternoon; and near it, in a gray holland costume and straw hat with a black ribbon, stood Cathie Mordon, looking dreamily across the lawn at the silver glimpse of river seen between the trees, flashing and scintillating in the sunshine.

The sunbeams rested on Cathie's thoughtful face, which was not so fair perhaps as it was four years before, though infinitely sweeter, and brought a reflected light into her brown eyes—eyes which had learned to look very gravely on life of late, and had

shed too many tears to keep all their old brightness. Her thoughts were busy with the past, as she stood turning her mended gloves about in her fingers, and staring abstractedly at the river. The day was one of Cathie's "unkept anniversaries." It was on this day, four years before, that she first learnt

"How mournful and hollow and drear
Sounds the word 'Farewell' from lips that are
dear."

What a gulf seemed to separate that midsummer eve from this! And yet, distant as the former appeared, it stood out vividly as a picture in her memory. Not a detail of the scene by the riverside was lost; not a word of the parting that followed was forgotten. But the recollection brought a pain almost too keen to be endured—pain born of the fear that the parting was forever. During the four years she had received but one letter from Frank; it reached her about six months after he had left England, and merely told her of his safe arrival in Melbourne.

She had not been allowed to reply to it, but had written a short time after her father's death, telling of all that had happened, and of their change of residence. To her surprise and perplexity, she had received no answer, and, writing again after an interval, her letter had been returned to her through the "Dead-Letter Office." Some of Frank's London friends, to whom she had applied for information, had been unable to tell her more than that he had given up his situation in less than six months after his arrival in Australia, and was believed to have joined an acquaintance who had purchased a sheep-farm in the bush.

Cathie had puzzled over his silence till her brain was bewildered and her heart sick. There seemed but two possible explanations—he was unfaithful to her, or he was dead. But the one she would not, and the other she could not, accept. Unfaithful? No. While he lived he would love her—she trusted him utterly. Dead? No. An instinct she could not define or understand, but which was as strong as conviction, told her that he still lived. But why had he not written? That was the miserable puzzle which had kept her awake many a weary hour "in the dead unhappy night, and when the rain was on the roof." The light of hope still burned in her heart, but it was

fast growing dim, and never had the flame sunk so low as on this particular midsummer afternoon, when she stood looking at the sunny lawn and the silver river, with eyes that saw nothing but shadow everywhere.

"How much longer are you going to stand there, Cathie?" asked Mrs. Mordon at last, looking up from her embroidery-frame at the other end of the room. Her voice had a querulous ring, which seemed to accord with the lines of age beginning to show in her face and the streaks of white in her dark hair. "I thought you professed to occupy every moment of your time."

Cathie came out of her dream with a start, and drew a long breath.

"So I do, as a rule, mamma; but I was in a day-dream just then."

"You are not going out again, surely, after walking about in the broiling sun all the morning?" Mrs. Mordon said, as Cathie began to draw on her gloves.

"I have not far to go, and I am not tired—very."

"Tired! No; you do not seem to know what fatigue is, fortunately for you," returned her mother, not hearing or not heeding the qualifying word. "But you will ruin your complexion, toiling about in the sun and dust without even a veil to protect you."

"My complexion! Oh, dear, I did not know I had such a thing left!" she said, laughing, and contemplating herself in the mirror over the chimney-piece as she buttoned her glove. "What little morsel of me is not tanned," she added, pushing back her hair, under which the skin was as delicately fair as ever, "is freckled. Just look."

"Where are you going, if I may venture to ask? You have no lesson to give this afternoon."

"No; I promised to spend an hour with nurse; I am going to take her a few little things. Still, I will stay in if you wish it; I can go after tea just as well; I shall have to work only an hour extra tonight," answered Cathie, glancing at a dreary pile of French exercise-books which had to be corrected before she laid her tired little head on her pillow.

Mrs. Mordon dropped a skein of wool, and stooped to pick it up.

"You can't go after tea; Sir Edward Forrest is coming."

The color rushed over Cathie's face.

"You have invited him again, mamma?" she asked.

"Yes, I invited him when he called this morning, as you would have known if you had stayed in the room instead of rushing off the moment he appeared. Why do you stand looking at me in that way, Cathie," she added, irritably, "as if I had somehow injured you, instead of doing my best to serve your interests?"

"You mean to act for the best, I know," she answered, gently; "but you are not serving my interests, mamma, in encouraging Sir Edward Forrest. It is only preparing pain for me, and disappointment for him, in the future."

Mrs. Mordon bit her lip, and her color deepened into a spot of red on each cheek.

"It is your intention to refuse him then, when he offers, as he certainly will, whether I continue to invite him here or not?" she said quietly, but in a voice which she could not keep from trembling.

"How can I accept him?" Cathie exclaimed. "How can you think it possible, mamma? You cannot suppose I have forgotten so soon? It is only four short years since poor Frank went away, and only a moment ago, as I stood at the window there, his parting look, his last words, came back to me as vividly as if every year had been but a day."

"You think of nothing but yourself!" her mother burst out passionately. "Your mind never travels beyond the narrow circle of your own memories and regrets and visionary hopes. Do you think I have nothing to regret and remember? Do you think I suffer nothing? What are your sentimental troubles in comparison with what I have borne and have still to bear? The sordid cares and difficulties of our wretched, poverty-stricken life make every day a martyrdom to me; but you, living in a cloudland of your own creating, neither know nor care what I suffer."

Cathie's breath came quickly for a moment, and she pressed her lips hard to keep herself from uttering the retort which rose to them.

"Dear mamma, do not talk so," she said, kneeling down on the stool at her mother's side. "I do understand and feel for you. I know that our life is harder for you than for me. I am young and do not mind; but you— And I have tried to spare you these cares and difficulties; I have indeed. I

would have kept all knowledge of them from you if I could."

"As if it were possible, when they are the common property of the very servants and tradespeople!"

"If you would only do as I have often begged you," Cathie suggested; "consent to take a lodger!"

"I tell you again that I will not 'take a lodger'! Lose forever such little social standing as we have left! No, to that humiliation I will not stoop; and, if you had a remnant of pride or self-respect remaining, you would not suggest it."

"I have so little pride," Cathie answered rather bitterly, "that I do not even see that it would be a humiliation. To me the humiliation is to live in constant dread of debt—to fear from day to day that we may not be able to pay for the food we eat." She put up her hands to her hot cheeks. "Ah, I think I could stoop to any sacrifice of dignity that would spare me that!"

"You need stoop no lower than to accept the love that is laid at your feet," the other retorted quickly—"the love of a good true man and a gentleman—a treasure which any other girl but you would be proud to accept. Why should you refuse it? What stands in the way? Nothing but the ghost of a childish love, dead long ago."

"Not dead on my side," put in Cathie, below her breath.

"But dead on Frank's, as his silence proves. Would he treat you with such insulting neglect if he still cared for you? I tell you, you are mad to think of sacrificing your life to such a shadow."

"It is not a shadow," the girl cried, raising her flushed face; "or, if it is, there is nothing real in life. My trust in Frank is unshaken. I believe that sooner or later his silence will be explained, and that, if I have faith and patience, those hopes of mine which you call visionary will be realized."

"Take care that in being faithful to love you are not false to duty," Mrs. Mordon returned, with pitiless emphasis. "Do you owe nothing to me as well as to yourself? I am at the wrong end of the journey, Cathie, for the rough up-hill path we have been treading lately. I need rest and shelter, and those you could give me if you would."

The color came and went on Cathie's face; she clasped her hands nervously.

"But may not the ease you long for be

bought too dear?" Cathie said, faintly. "Would not the misery of all my after-life be too heavy a price to pay for it?"

She took the two cold white hands that rested on her mother's lap in her own, and gazed into her face with a look Mrs. Mordon could not meet.

"If I could only make you understand!" Cathie went on in an agitated undertone. "If you could but look into my heart and see what it is like—this love you call a shadow! I have hardly a thought, a hope, a memory, that is not in some way connected with Frank. Consider what he has been to me. I loved him as a child and as a girl before I learned to love him as a woman—he was playmate, friend, brother—everything to me. You might as well bid me cease to love yourself as bid me forget Frank. My affection for him is as natural and as much a part of myself as my love for you. O mother, is there nothing in your own heart which speaks for me—no memory of your own youth which pleads my cause?"

The color flushed suddenly over the handsome faded face before her, and she felt a slight convulsive movement of the hand she held.

Unknowingly Cathie had touched a chord which had set every string of the world-worn heart vibrating. The ghost of "a day that was dead" rose before Mrs. Mordon's eyes, looking at her sadly and reproachfully. Her daughter's pleading voice was like the voice of her own youth; the clinging hands seemed to pull at her heartstrings. She put them aside hastily and rose.

"I see that no arguments or persuasions of mine would move you," she said; "I shall seek to influence you no further. Do as you will. You are free to follow your own heart."

"The heart is a safe guide, is it not, mamma?" Cathie asked, looking at her wistfully.

"How can I tell?" she returned, with dreary indifference, speaking more to herself than her companion. "It has never been mine; if it had, perhaps"—She broke off with a sudden catching of the breath, and left the sentence unfinished. "It is getting late; you will have no time for your walk," she added, hurriedly. "Before you go you can write a few lines to Sir Edward and put him off—say that I am unwell and cannot receive him this evening. It is true, for my head aches horribly. I shall go and

lie down till tea-time. No—you needn't come with me; write your note;" and she left the room.

For ten minutes Cathie sat at her desk, pen in hand, without writing a word, her eyes darkened with a look of doubt and perplexity, travelling slowly over the sunny landscape seen through the open window.

At last the timepiece striking half-past five roused her from her troubled revery, and with a long sigh she addressed herself to her task.

As she was crossing the hall after the letter had been written and despatched, she paused at the foot of the stairs, hesitated a moment, and then, putting down her sunshade, ran up to her mother's room. There was no response to her gentle tap at the door, so she entered and softly crossed the room to the bedside.

Mrs. Mordon had not heard the light footsteps; she was lying with her cheek on her hand, her eyes fixed on a long ray of sunlight which fell aslant between the drawn window-curtains on to the floor. Cathie stood and looked at her a moment in silence. There was something in her mother's face that drew her heart to her as she had never felt it drawn before. The dark eyes were dim with tears; the cold regular features were all softened and subdued; the face looked as she had seen it sometimes in dreams, but never before in reality.

Suddenly Mrs. Mordon looked up and saw her, and would have turned away; but with a sudden impulse Cathie caught her hands and prevented her.

"O mamma, do not turn away from me! We are alone in the world. Let us love each other!"

That forlorn appeal, and the look that accompanied it, found their way almost against her will to the mother's heart. Cathie saw that they had; and without waiting for an answer, with a little low fluttering cry she wound her arms about her mother's neck, and drew her head on to her bosom, and kissed it and cried over it, with little cooling words of tenderness putting back the silver-streaked hair, and laying her soft young cheek against the worn temples.

"Forgive me," she murmured, "if I have been selfish and neglectful."

"Hush! Don't talk of forgiveness," Mrs. Mordon interrupted, turning away her face, over which a hot flush had crept. "There, child, go now," she continued, putting her

away, but not ungently. "I can bear no more agitation—I am tired."

With a long-drawn sigh she let her head fall back among the pillows. Cathie arranged them for her, drew the curtains, and, once more kissing her, softly left the room, and started on her errand.

Her heart was heavy as she paced along the dusty Fulham lanes, heavy and perplexed. There had come upon her a sudden revulsion of feeling. Hitherto she had never doubted that to be true to her love was her duty as well as her happiness; but now she asked herself whether, in fulfilling that duty, she had not in truth lost sight of another, more difficult, but more sacred. Her mother's worn face haunted her like a reproach. "I need rest and shelter—you could give them me if you would," The words followed her like a mournful echo, and brought the tears again to her eyes.

She felt helpless and bewildered, like one overtaken by mist in a strange road, and longed for a friendly hand to guide her. "If Frank would but come back!" Involuntarily the passionate wish rose from her heart to her lips, and, as the murmured words escaped her, the sound of a quick, firm footstep behind made her start and turn with a sudden wild, irrational hope. But her face clouded again when she saw who it was that was striding after her in his gray summer suit and straw hat, with the usual "rabble rout" of dogs at his heels. Unwillingly enough she paused till Sir Edward came up—a tall, rather ungainly man of thirty, with a dark bearded face, redeemed from plainness by a pair of soft, kindly brown eyes somewhat like her own. He was very warm and out of breath with the haste he had made to reach her.

"Such a fortunate chance meeting you in this way!" he panted. He had not "met" her, by the by, but Cathie was not in a capitious mood this afternoon, and let it pass. "Hope we are going in the same direction, because, if so"—

"I am going to see nurse—Mrs. Penrhyn, at Dale Cottage. You know where that is?" said Cathie, maliciously, being full aware that he did not.

"To be sure—a—first turning to the right, isn't it?" he hazarded.

"The second to the left," she answered, dryly.

"Ah, yes, of course! I meant— Well, as I happen to be going that way—keep

down, Rollo—down, sir! He will upset your basket, Miss Mordon. May I carry it for you?"

"I think not, thank you; there are eggs in it, you see, and you might break them."

"Very likely," he answered, with a laugh. "I have been breaking eggs, metaphorically, all my life. I sometimes think I must have been born with a sense less than other folk; I seem to go blundering through the world like the traditional bull in the china-shop, smashing people's crockery and treading on their pet corns."

"If it is your nature, you cannot help it," said Cathie, cheerily.

"Does that strike you in the light of a consolation?" he returned, laughing. And then ensued a pause. He switched the roadside weeds with his cane, turning occasionally to keep his dogs in order. Cathie walked stolidly on, with her eyes fixed on her dusty little feet. If conversation was to be made it would have to be of his manufacture this afternoon—her mind felt like a stagnant pond.

"Glorious summer we are having," he remarked at length.

She assented to the proposition, and then "silence fell on them like a shade" again.

At last Sir Edward cleared his throat and spoke.

"Miss Mordon," he began huskily, "I wish to—there is something which—I have something to—to say to you."

He felt he had made a deplorable beginning, and the consciousness did not serve to render him more eloquent; however he went on desperately.

"Perhaps you can guess what it is. I think you must. I am not very clever at hiding what I feel, particularly when the feeling is so strong as my love for you. For I do love you, Cathie, with all my heart and soul—with all the better part of my nature. I have loved you almost from the first moment I saw you; and, whether you accept or reject me, I shall love you as long as I live. Do you think you can care for me a little in return, dear?"

Not an eloquent declaration by any means—clumsily expressed, and jerkily delivered; but the ring of truth was in every word, and Cathie's eyes moistened as she listened.

She hesitated in miserable indecision.

Might it not be best, even for herself, to accept what he offered? Was she sure that life had anything better in store for her?

Suppose Frank never returned, or returned with only "the ghost of a dead love" in his heart? But instantly that thought suggested another. Suppose he did return, faithful and loving as he went, what then? Why, then lifelong remorse, bitter unavailing regret that she had not had the patience to wait and trust a little longer.

Sir Edward, who had been watching her face intently, saw the change of expression, and read his answer before she spoke.

"I am so sorry, so distressed," she began, her eyes full of tears, her voice trembling. "I blame myself that this has happened. I ought to have known how to save you this disappointment. I do not affect to be surprised. I have feared for some time—that you were getting to care for me, but I fancied I had shown you by my manner lately"—

"Any other fellow would have understood it, no doubt," he said, with a sigh, as she paused; "but I am not quick at taking hints, and, if I noticed any change in your manner, I only fancied you had detected my secret and grown shy. It is a proof how blind and besotted with vanity I was," he added, with a rueful laugh, "that I actually fancied at times I was not altogether indifferent to you, that you liked my society, and were glad to see me."

"So I did; it was no mistake," Cathie cried, eagerly; "I liked you, and do still like you, very much; there is no or. I respect and esteem more than you."

"Well, if that is so," he interrupted, brightening, "why may I not hope, Cathie? I will have patience—I will wait any time you like, if I have only the hope of winning you at last. And I am bold enough to believe I should succeed eventually. I can't carry a situation by a *coup de main*, like some fellows, but I have any amount of 'staying power,' and I generally contrive to be 'in at the finish' when I have a clear field before me. And I have in this case, have I not?" he continued. "Your mamma herself told me there was no other attachment."

Her face crimsoned.

"No other engagement," mamma must have said, I think," she murmured, hardly above a whisper.

He looked puzzled. "I certainly understood Mrs. Mordon to say that you were heart-free," he returned. "Is it not true, Cathie?" he asked, wistfully.

If Cathie answered at all, it was inaudibly; but her face spoke for her, and all the light faded out of his own. There was a pause. Her heart ached for him; she knew by intuition what he was suffering.

"Would you mind telling me if it is any one that I know?" he said, very gently, at length.

She shook her head.

"He left England long before we knew you—before papa died. He was poor and we were rich in those days; that was why we were parted."

"Why, that is four years ago, at least!" he exclaimed. "You must have been very young then—a mere child. Forgive me, but are you quite sure you know your own heart?"

"I am quite sure," Cathie answered, simply, raising her eyes to his. "You see, we had known each other all our lives, and our love had grown with us, and become a part of our natures."

"Children's love," he muttered.

"At first, but not afterwards—not now. You must believe me," she said, earnestly—"indeed you must. I am not deceiving either myself or you."

Sir Edward made no answer, but he drew a long sigh, and with that sigh bid farewell to his happy dream and closed the sweetest chapter of his life.

Cathie was the first to speak again.

"I wish I could keep your friendship," she said, timidly; "but perhaps it is too soon to ask for that, though I hope there will come a time when you will be able to give it me—when you will think of me as a sister who loves you. In the mean while will you forgive me the pain I have been the means of causing you?"

"Forgive you, dear?" he repeated. "I have nothing to forgive, but much to thank you for; I would not, if I could, unlive the past few months. I have been very happy loving you, and I feel that I am a better, ay, and a happier man for having known you; and I hope I am not so ungenerous as to refuse you my friendship, Cathie, because you cannot accept my love. Will you let me prove it by doing what I can to make you happy? Tell me the name of your—your friend; I have some influence, and an awful lot of money—more than I know what to do with. I may be able to give him a helping hand. He need never know whose it was, you know."

Cathie tried to thank him, and broke down.

"How good you are—how generous! I do not know how to thank you. But I do not think you could help him, though I am very, very grateful to you for wishing it."

Somehow she could not tell him of the long silence, the dreary uncertainty, and of her absolute ignorance of Frank's whereabouts.

"It is my cousin Frank—Frank Mordon," she continued, looking up.

"Frank Mordon?" he repeated thoughtfully, as if the name struck him as familiar.

Has he any other name besides Frank?"

"Yes, Cuthbert—Francis Cuthbert Mordon."

"F. C. Mordon," he muttered, pondering it with knitted brows. "Can it be? Yes, it must be the same."

Her heart began to throb.

"What do you know of him? What have you heard?"

He did not answer her; he had come to a stop at the corner of the lane, and was stroking his beard and looking down at her very gravely—very sadly, Cathie fancied.

"No, you are right," he said at last, as if he had not heard her questions. "I can do nothing for him; he does not need my help now."

He took her hand in both his own, his eyes turned on her face with a strange yearning look. Was it sorrow for himself or for her? Cathie wondered, trembling with a vague misgiving.

"Good-by, dear little Cathie. Heaven bless you!"

His fingers tightened on hers for a moment with a convulsive pressure, then he dropped her hand and turned away abruptly, going back with long strides over the way he had come, while Cathie stood there, sick and giddy with the shock of a sudden fear—a fear which had turned her heart cold.

Why had she let him go? Why had she not detained and questioned him? She ran a few steps after him, but Sir Edward's long legs had already carried him out of sight beyond a turn in the road.

"He does not need my help now." She repeated the words to herself blankly over and over again. What did they mean? They could not mean that Frank was beyond the reach of help—beyond the reach of love and friendship—that he had passed

"over the silent sea into the unknown land"? No; if that had been so, Sir Edward would have told her; he would not have left her in ignorance. But suppose his courage had failed him, and he had left her to learn from others the news he dared not speak?

His last look still haunted her. It was plainly a look of sorrow; but for whom—himself or her?

Mechanically she turned and went on her way, but all the warmth and brightness was gone out of the day, the summer sun was cold, the soft scented air made her shiver.

"Eh, Miss Cathie, I'm glad you're come! I've been wearying to see you," said nurse, rising from her little tea-table as Cathie entered. "But how pale you are, my dear! Your cheeks are as white as my apron!"

"Are they? It is the heat, I suppose," Cathie answered, wearily, sitting down on the nearest chair by the little table under the window, where a gorgeous tea-tray was propped up against a pile of books—the "Pilgrim's Progress," the "Book of Dreams," the "Complete Herbalist," and the venerable "Mrs. Glasse," which, with an almanac and the Bible, constituted Mrs. Penrhyn's select library.

"Go on with your tea, nurse. I'm glad to sit and rest."

"It is hot, to be sure—the hottest midsummer we've had this many a year," responded Mrs. Penrhyn, resuming her seat. She poured out her second cup of tea, and then looked at her visitor again over her spectacles. "This is midsummer eve, Miss Cathie."

Cathie nodded, pushing back her hat and resting her head on her hand as she looked out between the geraniums and fuchsias at the dusty lane.

"It is four years ago since master Frank went away, and more than three since you heard from him, isn't it, missie?"

Cathie moved her head again without speaking.

Nurse stirred her tea slowly round and round, looking at it with a thoughtful frown.

"It's strange he has not written—very strange. I have some queer thoughts about it sometimes, Miss Cathie."

She shook her head, gazing darkly into the depths of her tea-cup.

"And I've had the oddest dreams about

him lately," she went on—"the oddest dreams I ever had about any one."

"What sort of dreams, Pennie—good or bad?"

"Well, you see, missie, they may be either, according to the interpretation of them. Now last night I dreamt as we were all back at Riverside again. I was sitting in the arbor by the clump of laurels, and I heard the splash of oars coming up the river distant at first, then nearer and nearer, till they sounded close by; and somehow I knew it was Master Frank. I don't know how I knew it; but I did. I jumped up all in a hurry, and ran to the waterside; and, Miss Cathie, far and near there was never a boat to be seen—only a bare stretch of water. It makes me shiver now to think of the turn it gave me. Still it may not mean trouble. I can't tell. Anybody can dream, but it isn't everybody as can explain their dream. Now my mother, she could interpret dreams wonderful, and if you told her, after anything particular had happened to you, what sort of dreams you'd had before it occurred, she'd show you, as plain as print, how it had all been foreshadowed, if you had but had wit to understand them. Yes," nurse went on, with a retrospective sigh; "she was a great believer in dreams was my poor mother, and in charms too; many a time I've heard her tell how she saw her husband—my father—through a midsummer-eve charm."

"What's that, Pennie?"

"Come, now, Miss Cathie," remonstrated nurse, gravely; "*don't make yourself out to be as ignorant as all that, after the education you've had, and all! Why, you must know what a midsummer-eve charm is!*"

"I have forgotten perhaps; refresh my memory."

"Well, if a girl wants to know who her future husband will be, she fasts from mid-day to midnight on midsummer eve, and when midnight comes she lays a clean cloth on a table, and sets food on it—bread and cheese and ale my mother set; but it don't matter—leaving the door open, mind—and then sits down as if she was going to eat, and on the first stroke of midnight the person she is to marry will come into the room, and drink and break bread, and then bow to her and go away again."

"And you say your mother tried it?"

"When my mother was a young girl, my father, who was her cousin, dared her to

try the charm one midsummer eve. She spread the table and set the cottage door open, and sure enough, on the first stroke of twelve, the appearance of her cousin walked in!"—

"Do you mean his ghost?"

"It was not his ghost, because he was alive and well; nor it wasn't himself either, because, as he always said, 'how could he have been there if he was asleep in bed at the time?' Well, it came in and sat down, and not only broke bread, but drank the ale, and made a clean sweep of everything on the table before it bowed and went away. Now my father, the real man, was naturally a very hearty eater, so that was very curious, Miss Cathie."

"Very curious," Cathie echoed, with a faint smile.

"Missie," nurse said, suddenly, after a brief silence, "I do wish you'd try the charm. Now do; it can't do any harm."

"Nor any good, you superstitious old woman!"

"I am not superstitious, Miss Cathie," she returned with dignity; "no one can say that is a fault of mine. But call me what you like, only do it—just to please me."

"Is faith a necessary ingredient of the charm?" asked Cathie, as she rose, putting her hands on the old woman's shoulders. "Because, if so, I warn you that it will fail. I haven't a shred of belief in your sorceries, you dear old witch!"

"It don't matter a pin whether you believe it or not; the charm will work all the same. Promise me to try it tonight."

"Well, well—'a wilful woman will have her way'—I promise."

"Then mark my words, Miss Cathie," Mrs. Penrhyn said, rising and emphasizing her words with uplifted finger—if Master Frank's above ground, you'll see him tonight."

"And if not?" Cathie murmured.

"If not, you'll have a sign. You mark my words."

A quarter to twelve o'clock. Early hours are the rule at Swansnest, and all the little household have long been sleeping—save one, who keeps a solitary vigil.

It is a calm night, scented, silent, starlit; the "weary moon" is travelling slowly over the broad expanse of purple night-sky, one little fleecy cloud is wandering after her, like a lamb after its shepherdess.

The moonlight sleeps upon the river, upon the lawn, upon the silent house, its grave, chill, solemn brightness intensified by dark belts of shade from the shrubberies and the tall elms by the waterside.

The drawing-room window stands open to the night, and near it,

"where the faded moon
Makes a dim silver twilight,"

is a small table covered with a white cloth. Cathie flits noiselessly about the shadowy room, lighted only by the moonbeams, setting out wine and bread and fruit for the charmed repast.

She had begun the task carelessly enough, her only feeling one of listless wonder at herself for having undertaken it when she felt so little in the mood for such trifling; but insensibly the influence of the scene and the hour crept over her, and subdued her mind to a vague awe, half fearful, half expectant. Every now and then she paused in her task to glance over her shoulder at the shadowy room, where the very furniture had a strange, unfamiliar look in the doubtful light, and her own figure, reflected in the mirror, startled her, or to strain her eyes towards the moonlit solitude of the lawn and river.

How still it was! The trees, standing motionless, with outstretched arms, seemed to be holding their breath lest the rustle of a leaf should break the silence, and their shadows on the grass seemed even more still than themselves.

All was ready now, and she had only to take her seat at the table, and wait—for what?

Cathie had not a grain of superstition in her healthy nature. Never yet in her life had she experienced fear from other than material causes. But, as she sat waiting at the table where that weird repast was spread, with the shadows of the sleeping house behind her, and the shadows of the silent night before her, the wide, vague, mysterious night, with its depths beyond, depths of purple gloom, a superstitious fear crept over her and paralyzed every limb.

What if her vague dread should be true—if her lover had indeed passed "into the silent land"? Might not the magnetic force of love and longing have power to draw him back for a moment from that mysterious shore? Should she die of fear if he came? Or could she bear to look calmly on the

familiar face, as of one who had returned from a far country to tell her how he fared?

A distant clock struck twelve, every stroke falling faintly, but distinctly, on the silence, like pebbles dropped into still water. When the sounds ceased, the silence seemed more intense than before, as water looks calmer when, after a passing ripple, it settles into repose again.

Cathie had ceased to struggle with herself now; fear possessed her, mind and body, fettering her limbs, oppressing her breath, damping her forehead with a cold dew. There was a pause. Suddenly a light wind arose, swayed the topmost branches of the elms, shook a handful of leaves from the roses, and drove a fleecy cloud before the moon. In a moment a dark curtain fell over the picture of moonlit lawn and river. When it lifted again, she saw a dark figure standing opposite to her on the threshold of the window. It stood between her and the light, so that she could discern only its outlines and the poise of the head; but her heart recognized it. Living man or disembodied spirit, it was Frank.

She could not speak; she could not stir. She sat with her cold hands on the table before her, her lips apart, her dilated eyes fixed in an agony of suspense on the motionless figure. Would Cathie ever forget that thrilling moment when she was face to face with her lover and yet did not know whether he was dead or living?

"Cathie!"

She felt, rather than heard, the low-breathed word which fell on the silence like a sigh. She tried to answer; but her cold lips would not move.

"Cathie!" the familiar voice repeated, louder this time, questioningly, wonderingly, almost fearfully; then the figure crossed the threshold into the room, and came round the table to her side.

A hand was laid on her shoulder, and at the touch the horrible nightmare fear fled like a shadow.

It was no awful unfamiliar spirit that had come back to her, but Frank himself—breathing, living, loving!

She started to her feet with a stifled cry of joy, and the next moment his arms were round about her and his warm kisses on her lips.

"Frank—Frank—Frank?" was all she could say at first, kissing him, clinging to him, patting him to feel if he were solid—

though the fashion in which he returned her kisses left no room for doubt on that point—making a little simpleton of herself in short.

There were a few seconds of "eloquent silence," and then Frank put her away from him a little so that he could look into her face.

"Cathie," he said anxiously, "what was the matter just now? What were you doing here? Were you asleep? If you knew how startling it was to find you sitting here all alone at midnight, in the dark house, with the moonlight on your face and that awful look of fear in your eyes!" He shuddered. "What was it, darling? Did I frighten you?"

"Yes, you frightened me for a moment," Cathie answered, with a queer little sound which began as a laugh and ended as a sob. "I thought it was—I thought you were"—

"My own ghost?" questioned Frank, beginning to recover himself. "I declare I almost made the same mistake about you! I'm not quite convinced that it was a mistake," he added; "there is such a visionary unreal sort of a look about you tonight. Can you assure me on your honor that this is flesh-and-blood Cathie, and not an 'affable familiar ghost'?"

To convince himself of her reality he gave her a hug which left her no breath to answer him.

"Oh, my sweet—my sweet! After the long years, after the weary waiting, what joy to hold you in my arms again!

"Ah, silver shrine, here will I take my rest
After so many hours of toil and quest,
A famished pilgrim!"

Waking or sleeping, for months this meeting has been before me; but the reality is brighter than my dreams. I have travelled night and day, Cathie, in the hope that we might meet again on midsummer eve—a romantic idea, wasn't it? Unfortunately I arrived in town from Liverpool too late for the last train down here; but I felt too restless to go to bed in a stuffy hotel, so I hired a boat and sculled up the river. I had kept my little duplicate key of the garden gate, and just took French leave, and came in to have a look at the castle where my enchanted princess lay, sleeping and dreaming of me, as I supposed; but I found her particularly wide-awake, and keeping a very uncanny sort of vigil. In the name of all

that is necromantic," he added, turning to the table, "what have you been about? Two plates and two glasses! Why, you witch, it looks as if you had expected me! But is this the best fare you could set before a man just come off a journey from the Antipodes? What's the meaning of it all?" he demanded, wrinkling his brows in perplexity.

"Nothing — a charm — foolishness," laughed Cathie, blushing. "I'll tell you another time."

"All right," returned Frank, cheerily. "Take your time; we've got our life before us. Isn't that a blessed thought, little woman? Let me see if it makes you as happy as it does me." He took her face in her hands, and turned it to the light, pressing the soft little cheeks between his brown fingers. "I left you a rose, and I find you a lily," he said, and then took the quickest means of turning her into a rose again.

"I'm awfully gone off, I know," Cathie said plaintively, when she was allowed to speak.

"I half feared to find you 'gone off' in another sense," he returned, "not having received a word from you all these years. If you had sent me but a line, Cathie, when poor Uncle Cuthbert died and all the troubles came, I would have returned at once; as it was, having been out of the reach of newspapers, I learnt it only by the merest chance a few months ago. I did so long sometimes to have an answer to my letters, darling."

"Your letters!" Cathie gasped. "Why, I haven't seen only one since you left!"

Frank stared at her in blank bewilderment.

"Here, let me sit down," he said, with desperate calmness. "Now break it to me gently. Did you get the first I wrote, informing you of my arrival at Melbourne? You did? Very good. And the second, telling you that, as there seemed no chance of getting on where I was, I had given up my situation and joined Ted Scott in a sheep-farm? No? Nor the other, telling you of my poor mother's death? 'No,' again! Then I suppose you missed all the rest, describing the successive rounds of my rough-and-tumble fight with fortune—a fight in which I was floored over and over again, but always 'came up smiling'? I received such a blow about a year ago, when Ted and I were burnt out by the bush

fires, that I thought it was all up with me; however I determined to stake all on a last throw before I gave up the game, parted company with Ted, and set off on a pilgrimage to the Cape diamond-fields. I suppose Fortune was tired of punishing a man who never knew when he was beaten—anyhow she suddenly left off buffeting me and took to pelting me with diamonds. Absolutely I was frightened at my own luck. Every day I expected it would turn, but it lasted till I had won, not a fortune, according to my ambitious ideas, but the beginning of one, what will enable me to start in life again from the middle rung of the ladder instead of the bottom; and, if I don't reach the top at last, it won't be my fault, Cathie."

"Did you write me of your good fortune?" Cathie asked.

"No, I didn't. You see I thought if you had given me up, as your silence made me fear, you wouldn't care to hear of it, and, if you were still true to me, you would rather hear it from my own lips. However, when I reached England, I found that, thanks to the 'penny-a-liners,' my fame had preceded me; according to the newspapers, Sindbad's luck was a trifle compared to mine. But to return to the puzzle of the letters," he continued. "Knowing nothing of the changes that had taken place, I directed to Riverside. Would that account for your not receiving them?"

"No. Mr. Lee, who has the house now, has frequently forwarded letters which have been addressed to us there by mistake. He sends them through the post, addressed to mamma, and"—

Cathie caught her breath quickly, and the color rushed over her face. She looked up at Frank, who looked back with grave significance at her. There was no need for any more conjectures—the puzzle was explained only too clearly.

There was a brief silence; he watched her anxiously, dreading to see the soft eyes darken, the lips set in the hard repellent expression he knew so well. He needed not have feared—that look would never darken Cathie's face again. She looked up at him pleadingly, deprecatingly.

"Poor mamma!" she said, in a tremulous voice. "I believe, do you know, Frank, that she meant to act for the best—she thought it would be better for me to forget you. You know how anxious she always was that I should make a 'good marriage,' and she has still clung to the idea, in spite of our reverses, particularly of late, since Sir Edward—but I will tell you of that another time. We are so happy now, we can afford to forgive her, can't we, dear?"

Frank took the pleading face into his hands again, and kissed it tenderly, thankfully.

"That we can, my darling, and not only to forgive but to forget; we will never speak or think of it more. There is no room in our hearts for resentment, is there? They are full to the brim of love and happiness. Look!" he added. "While we have been talking, the night has stolen away and the dawn is breaking. The shadows have passed from the world as they have from our lives. 'Sorrow has endured for a night, but joy is come with the morning!'"

A DIMINUTIVE DEPENDENCY.

BY REV. DR. H. STANDISH.

IN the year 1506 a well-furnished fleet of sixteen sail, commissioned to strengthen the dominion of Portugal in Asia and Africa, came upon a group of three islands some fifteen hundred miles west of the Cape, to which, by way of registering his discovery, the Portuguese admiral gave his own name of Tristan d'Acunha. A hundred and thirty-seven years later the islands were explored by the Dutch, an example followed by the French in 1767, but neither was tempted to take possession. The principal island of the group afterwards became a rendezvous for American whalers, and was occupied by them down to 1810, when they appear to have abandoned it; for in 1811 the population of Tristan d'Acunha, all told, consisted of an American, a half-caste Portuguese and a native of Minorca. The American, Jonathan Lambert, invested himself with the sovereignty of what had hitherto been No-man's Land by the style and title of Prince of Tristan d'Acunha, and Lord of Nightingale and Inaccessible Islands. By the formal instrument proclaiming the commencement of his reign, the self-made prince gave himself and his heirs the right to give or sell his dominions to whomsoever they thought fit, and bound his subjects to receive all comers upon the principles of hospitality and good-fellowship, and supply them, for due consideration, with anything within the resources of his territories. These were limited enough. The native productions of the three islands were of no marketable value, but Lambert and his two subjects managed to raise fair crops of vegetables. They were not so fortunate in their live-stock, losing most of the turkeys and all their ducks; but their pigs thrived tolerably, and their goats catered for themselves with good results.

Prince Jonathan's reign was not of long duration. He disappeared in May, 1812, and was never heard of more. Whether he

took French leave of his dominions, was drowned in crossing to one of the smaller islands, or was put out of the way by his subjects, is matter for speculation. Those he left behind him suffered much from the depredations of American privateers, and things generally went ill with them; and when, in consequence of Napoleon's imprisonment at St. Helena, the British government deemed it advisable to despatch a small force from the Cape to take formal possession of Tristan d'Acunha, the Portuguese slipped away, and the new-comers found no one to dispute their right of occupation save Thomas the Minorcan. He was soon hail-fellow with the soldiers, and a constant customer at the canteen. Where he got the money he spent so freely was a mystery. In his drunken moments—and he rarely had sober ones—Thomas talked about hidden treasure, and promised that the man who pleased him most should learn where it lay. He died too suddenly to keep his promise; and although many sought for the golden hoard, nothing was found except an old wooden-bottomed kettle full of rags.

Upon the death of Napoleon, and the withdrawal of the garrison from Tristan d'Acunha, Corporal Glass, an old soldier with a young wife, obtained permission to remain on the island; and that he might start comfortably, his officers gave him a bull, a cow, and a few sheep, and made over to him such of their belongings as they did not care to carry away. Not long afterwards, two sailors belonging to the St. Helena squadron, taken with the ex-corporal's mode of life, determined, when paid off, to lay in a stock of useful articles and join the "governor." In due time they reached England and received their pay, but, unable to resist temptation, the tars went on the spree, and forgot all about Tristan d'Acunha until their pockets were empty. They then set off for the Admiralty to ask "my

lords" to give them a free passage to the island. Luckily for the old salts, Admiral Cockburn recognized one of them—Taylor—as a shipmate, and they soon found themselves on board a man-of-war bound for the Cape. Glass received them cordially, and building themselves a house, which they dubbed Bachelors' Hall, the pair jogged on together in their strangely-selected home.

In 1824, Mr. Earle, a passenger on board a South American schooner, landed on the island for a day or two's sketching, and being left in the lurch by the treacherous skipper, had to wait six months for a chance of getting away again, and so passed one half-year of his life without seeing a sad look on a human face. Certainly there were not many faces about. Half-a-dozen houses, built of wreck timber, and thatched with grass, sufficed to shelter the entire population. Taylor, the man-of-war's man, was still to be found at Bachelors' Hall, but his partner had departed, not this life, but the island, and he had found a new messmate in Old Dick, a dapper little Londoner washed ashore from a wreck, who had been waterman, fisherman, seaman and dragoon. Two more ocean waifs saved from an Indian, a young sailor, named White, and a half-caste Portuguese girl from Bombay, had made a match of it, and, with Mr. and Mrs. Glass, made up the tale of adult settlers. The so-called governor was a fine good-humored Roxburgh man, who, Scot-like, cherished in his heart the land he had left forever. Undertaking to convert Earle's cloak into a complete suit, he was such an unconscionable time about the job, that that gentleman feared he should be reduced to Adamite garb. At last the governor said, "It's no use holding out any longer, I have had your bonnie cloak out several times, and the scissors in my hand; but it's the first tartan that ever came to Tristan d'Acunha, and I cannot find it in my heart to cut it to pieces." He was comforted by being presented with the tartan, on condition that he furnished its owner with a pair of trousers of some sort, and a few days later, Mr. Earle's lower limbs were clad in a pair of inexpressibles with fronts of sailcloth, and backs of goatskin.

The island ladies did not give the visitor much chance to cultivate an acquaintance; they were too busy in the cook-house, and tending their large families of healthy robust youngsters. Sometimes they joined

the gentlemen round the fire at Government House, when the evening hours sped swiftly by, as song and yarn went merrily round without the aid of the cheering glass. That was not the only thing debarred them, or that they debarred themselves. Bread they never saw, and, although they owned a fair stock of cattle and sheep, were content to live upon milk and potatoes, with a bit of celery-flavored goat-flesh, seaweed-flavored pork, or a little fish by way of a change. They had no difficulty in raising poultry; the difficulty lay in keeping the birds, after they were raised, out of the clutches of the wild descendants of cats that had taken to bush life, bold, cunning, fierce creatures.

When the bishopric of Cape Town was constituted, Tristan d'Acunha was included in the new diocese, and, in 1868, Bishop Gray went there to strengthen the hands of the Rev. W. F. Taylor, who had devoted himself to supplying the spiritual and educational wants of the little community. Glass had died two or three years before, and Peter Green, a native of Rotterdam, wrecked on the island in 1836, filled his place. A few months prior to the bishop's arrival, one-fourth of the inhabitants had left for the United States, reducing the population to seventy-five persons; owning among them two hundred head of cattle, three hundred sheep, a hundred or so pigs, and some five hundred head of poultry. Many of these were also inclined to try their fortune elsewhere, and, upon the transference of the island in the following year to the bishopric of St. Helena, bringing about the withdrawal of Mr. Taylor to Cape Town, more than half the people went with their beloved pastor.

Distance by no means lends enchantment to the view in the case of Tristan d'Acunha, for its outward aspect is anything but inviting to the eyes of land-hungry mariners. The island rises precipitously from the sea in a continuous chain of lava heights, between two and three thousand feet high, furrowed by water-courses and ravines, and clothed with scrub and dwarf pine, while above this rocky surf-beaten barrier frowns a black peak seven thousand feet in height. On the north-western extremity is a fine tract of undulating land sloping to the cliffs, and at the northern end of this tract, hard by the anchorage, is the settlement. The soil here is rich, and a floating belt of kelp seaweed supplies all that is wanting to keep it in good condition; but it cannot be turned

to much agricultural account, owing to the cruel winds that sweep across it with such extraordinary violence, that the inhabitants have been compelled to replace their timber dwellings by cottages built of stone blocks four or five feet square, dove-tailed into each other, mortar being unobtainable. Sir W. Thomson says it was curious to see the people building their cottages. They got two or three large spars—salvage from unlucky ships—and, “laying them up against the wall at a low angle, had them carefully greased, and by a method known to have been used in Assyria, and even in Egypt, they gradually moved on rollers and slid up the blocks to the top of the wall, when they were fixed in their places.” Within two miles of the settlement is a sloping grass plain, several thousand acres in extent, serving as grazing ground for some four hundred head of cattle and more sheep. Small plots of this tract are fenced off for the cultivation of vegetables, and sheltered spots, formed by depressions in the ground, are planted with fruit trees. Wheat cannot be grown, the island being infested with mice—thanks, probably, to the crusade against the cats having ended in their extermination, Seals and goats, formerly super-abundant, are now rare; indeed, the latter have disappeared altogether, although some are still to be caught upon Nightingale Island, which might much more appropriately be called Penguin Island. Covered with tussack grass, forming a dense jungle, Nightingale Island affords anything but easy travelling. Long avenues run between the “tussacks,” along which it is impossible to pass for a single yard without crushing penguins’ nests hidden under the long grass, or trampling young birds to death, while the old ones, having no fear of man, draw blood from an intruder’s legs with their long sharp beaks. When the Challenger visited the island the penguins occupied from one to eight acres of it. “At certain times perhaps a thousand would come out from the various lanes, and walk down to the sea and squattle in it. The moment they were in the water they acted just as if they were fishes. The gray groove in their backs was occasionally seen above the surface, but it was scarcely possible to imagine they were birds; they looked like gray mullets. Having fished for a while, they returned to their nests by a regular path, which was beaten as flat as a sheep-walk. The whole was carried out by a reg-

ular system, the birds going to the sea by one path and returning by another.”

In the old time of fifty years ago, the islanders raised their live stock and vegetables principally for trading purposes; but vessels of any sort so seldom visit the place now, that they have no means of disposing of surplus produce, and are hard put to it to obtain such necessities as blankets, clothes and flour, and such luxuries as tea, coffee and tobacco; so while there is land enough and stock enough for a much larger number of people, the limited population find it difficult to live comfortably, and enjoy nothing like so pleasant a life as did the original settlers. Captain Bosanquet took a census of the inhabitants on the 12th of October, 1875, when there were on the island fourteen families, consisting of forty-nine males and thirty-one females, of whom seventy-one were native-born. The oldest inhabitants were Thomas Glass, a son of Governor Glass, and Mary Green, who came from St. Helena in 1827, and a couple of old widows, the relics of old man-of-war’s men—Maria Cotton’s husband having served as a guard over Napoleon, and Sarah Swain’s husband being a Trafalgar man, who died but lately at the age of 103.

The arrival of the Diamond was the signal for a general holiday, and the visitors were charmed by the cleanliness and neat appearance, the quiet and unaffected good manners of their welcomers. There had been an addition to the population the night before, and the little lady and twenty-four other children were baptized by the ship’s chaplain; who also had the pleasant task of uniting the only girl of marriageable age to a smart young fellow of seventeen. The bride’s father entertained the officers of the Diamond at a wedding-feast, in which the entire community took part, astonishing his guests by the abundance of good things he put on the table, and their excellent serving.

The captain, on taking counsel with the older members of the community, found them agreed as to the desirability of having an officially-appointed head; but what they wanted more was a resident clergyman. Among the things especially acceptable they set down bibles, prayer-books and school-books, blankets, serge for clothing, plows, spades, pickaxes, cords, and axles for cart-wheels, blasting-powder, a signal-staff and two ensigns, and one or two whaleboats with material for repairing them.

A GAME FOR TWO.

BY ADA FLETCHER STRICKLAND.

CHAPTER I.

"So you have boarders already, Mrs. Barnes," said Miss Herndon, pausing at the foot of the stairs with her basket in her hand, looking at her landlady reproachfully, with the shadow of a frown on her brow.

"Indeed, Miss Jean, and I couldn't help it! I know you would have liked it better to have the house to yourself," said Mrs. Barnes. "But what was a poor woman to do? Here comes they one fine morning and just took possession of that front room whether or no. When you get acquainted with that blue-eyed one you'll see how hard it is to refuse him anything."

"Mrs. Barnes," said the young lady, gravely, but with a dimple in her cheek that betrayed her, "do you not know that blue eyes have no charms for venerable schoolma'ams like Miss Austen and myself? And of all things, Mrs. Barnes, a blue-eyed man! I hope his eyes will be clear enough to see very soon that the less we see of them the better we shall like it. Give me that other basket, please, and I will retire before I say anything more."

"You're just the same Miss Jean," said the landlady, looking up admiringly at the girl who stood two steps above her, her tall, slender figure in its neat linen travelling robe, carried proudly erect, the dark brown hair in a simple coil at the back of her well-shaped head. She was a pleasant picture

to look at, this Jean Herndon, with her clear, pale complexion, haughty brown eyes, and firm, sensible mouth, and she had not lived twenty-five years in this world of flat-tery, without knowing it; but it was only as a picture to be looked at, that she had lived the last ten years of her life. Her best friends knew but very little of her nature, and, indeed, she had not many of these, for there were but few she allowed to come near enough to learn to love her. Yet she could be irresistibly attractive when she chose, as many had found who only deemed her at first, what one disappointed admirer had styled her, a woman whom God had made without a heart.

"Yes, Mrs. Barnes, the same 'Miss Jean,' and likely to remain so, in spite of all the blue eyes in the world," and with a smile she ran lightly up the stairway, humming a tune that was caught up by a sweet, clear voice within her room. "You will not sing long, Gracie," she said, solemnly. "So sing away, little birdie."

The girl addressed turned quickly from the window, and with a movement that showed how well her name suited her, clasped her companion round the waist and drew her to her side.

"Like Philip Phillips I cry, 'How can I keep from singing,' when I look at this view and think of Him who made this beautiful earth, and gave me eyes and heart to appre-

clate it?" The sweet blue eyes kindled as she spoke, and Jean thought she had never seen anything fairer than her little friend. Her own voice softened as she spoke, and she rested her hand caressingly on the golden head.

"I wish I could feel as you do always, little Grace," she said. "Here am I, fretting because a shadow has crossed my sunshine, and you look too far above to see the shadows."

"What has vexed you, Jeanie?" said the other, turning to look into her friend's eyes.

"Oh, a little thing. Only that we are not to have our summer to ourselves, as I thought. Mrs. Barnes has been beguiled into taking two specimens of the 'genus homo' into her home, one of whom she declares has blue eyes that cannot be resisted. I am tired of life, Gracie Austen."

"Don't say that, Jean," the other was beginning, when Jean suddenly grasped her hand.

"Listen!"

A window below them was suddenly thrown open, and an unmistakable masculine voice floated up to them.

"I'd like to know what our landlady means by closing this window every time we step out, Rob. There's nobody above or below to be disturbed by our voices or cigars."

"That's where you are mistaken, my boy," said another deeper voice. "You've not been into the front hall since you came in. There are two 'Saratogas' out there, with lots of other feminine fixings, and there are two ladies that belong to 'em, or that they belong to, up-stairs."

"Women, Rob! You don't mean to tell me that after all our plans to get rid of the sex we are to be shut up for the summer with two of them?"

"As Sam Weller would say, 'I don't mean nothin' else, your honor,'" said the other.

"Did you learn any names, Robert?"

"There was one trunk distinctly and clearly marked 'Jean Herndon.' The other I could not see."

There was a sound as if some one had risen rapidly and came closer to the window, and the next few words came more distinctly to the listeners.

"Jean Herndon! Of all women in the world, the one I have the least desire to know! What have I done that fate should

be so unkind to me! Do you know her, Rob?"

"Yes, a little, which is as much, I fancy, as any man can say. What do you know about her, Ross?"

"I never saw her, but I have heard of her, and I'll tell you my impression. A woman who knows she is beautiful and superior in intellect to all the women and most of the men about her, and who, as a consequence, holds herself infinitely above her race. A woman like Tennyson's Maud. Faultily faultless, icily regular, splendidly null."

"There is a good deal of truth in what you say," said the other. "But still I believe the girl has a heart, and will awake to the fact of its possession some day."

"Like Pygmalion's statue," said the other, with a short laugh, "which I fancy must have been a very uncomfortable object to have around before her soul was breathed into her. If there was any place else to go to, Rob, I'd move my boarding—"

Before the answer could reach them, Jean drew her companion away from the window to the furthest corner of the room, and stood with her hands on her shoulders looking into her face, until a merry peal of laughter rang from Gracie's lips. The proud red lips parted over the even white teeth, and the tell-tale dimple came out in Jean's cheek.

"My child," she said, "do you ever remember hearing an adage that ran something like this: 'Listeners never hear any good of themselves'? How wise and true! And how good a thing it is Grace Austen's name was not discovered on that other Saratoga, or we should have had a review of her character by Mr. Robert Moulton, who should certainly know something about it. Be thankful, little Gracie! But hear me, O ye Fates!" suddenly changing her tone. "By all the power of my intellect and beauty I do declare, and affirm, having an objection to oaths, that before this summer is over, Ross Arnold shall take back all he has said this morning, and find out that there is life enough in the 'statue,' he has such a contempt for, to bring his heart to the dust."

Grace looked at her steadily a moment. "You will do it, Jean," she said, briefly. "But beware! In all such games there is a chance that the 'biter may be bitten!'"

"There is no danger here, Gracie," said

Jean, proceeding rapidly with her toilet. "How could there be danger for a 'woman without a heart'? I'll don my brightest armor now, and then—to the conquest!"

An hour later, Mrs. Barnes's boarders met at the tea-table. Miss Herndon radiant in her floating robe of a black gauzy substance that made her complexion more dazzling than ever by contrast, with a fragrant tea rose in her hair, and a cluster of buds holding the filmy lace about her throat, and Miss Austen, in the white dress and blue ribbons that set off her rather childish beauty to great advantage, were in the room when the gentlemen made their appearance. Rob Moulton came forward with a look of glad surprise to grasp Gracie's hand, and was just going to bow in the usual distant way to Jean, when he was surprised by seeing her hand extended and a cordial smile on her face.

"A pleasant surprise, Mr. Moulton! Gracie and I thought no one had discovered or *would* discover the beauty of our summer retreat."

The introductions were soon over, and conversation and supper progressed pleasantly together. Jean came out bravely in her new role, much to the surprise of all parties concerned. Gracie caught herself occasionally dropping her knife and fork to look at her friend, as she sent some saucy answer across the table to Rob Moulton, or bent her head in pleased attention to something Ross was saying. And he, bewildered and amazed at finding her so different a being from what he had pictured her, had not much to say, and could not but feel himself a dull companion. Mrs. Barnes looked on in undisguised amazement; but Rob, looking sharply at her now and then, thought within himself:

"It's a game my lady is playing. I'll watch it through."

Tea over, the party adjourned to the veranda that, running on both sides of the house, afforded excellent opportunities for promenading and *tete-a-tete* interviews. There the pleasant hours of the summer evening were whiled away with talk and song, for Gracie would bring Jean's guitar from the Saratoga, and the white hands touched the strings softly in the twilight, while the strong sweet voice sang many old-time ballads seconded by Gracie's soft alto.

And by and by it was found that Rob could sing tenor to many of their songs, and

Ross a smooth deep bass, so presently all four voices rang out in the stillness. The ballad was "Auld Lang Syne"—a song that had been the favorite of Jean's father, and which she had sung for him the very evening he died, sitting by his side in the twilight. So when she rose to say good-night, Ross could not but see a tear gleaming on her cheek in the moonlight, and he went to his room more mystified than ever. And Mrs. Barnes, good soul, listening to the music, thought how glad she was "things was turning out so pleasant, though what had come over Miss Jean she couldn't for the life of her make out."

CHAPTER II.

A MONTH of this life flew rapidly by, and still Jean kept up her acting, as she called it, though Gracie declared it suited her so well, and was so easy for her, that she believed it was only her natural self, while she had been acting a part for years. You will never be our "cold bright star again," she said, as the friends sat together one evening, under an overhanging rock almost a mile away from the house.

It happened they were alone that evening. The gentlemen had gone on a long tramp in search of game, and Jean, who was fond of walking, had enticed Grace into a longer walk than usual. On their return they paused under the rock at whose base rippled a tiny spring.

"I don't know, Gracie," said Jean. "I know there was a time in my life when I was in reality just what you see me now, but I have had enough hard lessons in life since then, to turn me into the statue I have seemed. Until I was fifteen years of age, I heard—saw—knew nothing but flattery and praise. A motherless child—called pretty, and an heiress—I did not dream that all the friendship and adulation about me was not sincere. I was pure-hearted and true then, Gracie, and imagined everybody else to be so. Then came the awakening. My father's death brought with it the knowledge that he had been betrayed and robbed by a friend whom he had most trusted, and his only child was left almost a beggar. Then when I saw friend after friend turn from me; when the very schoolmates who had almost fawned at my feet the week before, now passed me without speaking; when I saw this repeated through the five years of struggle that followed; when not a hand of

all my butterfly friends was extended to aid me—do you wonder that I have learned to distrust all human nature?"

There was silence between the friends for a while, for Gracie was one of that small class of women who know when "silence is golden." Then she said, looking archly up into her friend's face,

"But how about your scheme, Jeanie? Do you not find that it is as I prophesied? That there is danger for you, as well as your victim?"

For the first time in her life, Gracie saw a crimson flush on Jean's clear, pale cheek, and there was a slight tremor in her voice as she answered:

"I shall conquer, Gracie! Never fear—I feel the hour is near at hand."

And just then a wreath of bright flowers, well-aimed, crowned the haughty head, and looking up they saw Rob and Ross above them. The walk home was a pleasant one, but there was a tinge of sadness in the pleasure, for each knew it must be the last. Ross Arnold's holiday was over. Junior partner in a large wholesale firm, his presence was needed—just now demanded—by his seniors, and on the evening of the next day he must leave them. Rob and Gracie, long true friends, now acknowledged lovers, lingered far behind, and the two walked home alone in the fading sunset.

"This has been a happy month, Jean," at length said Ross, softly, "I wonder if it is the last we shall ever pass together—"

"Oh no," said Jean, gayly. "If you come and take possession of Mrs. Barnes's front room next summer as you did this, you will no doubt find Gracie and I here before the summer is over."

"I hardly think Gracie will be with you," he said, significantly, glancing back at the couple who followed.

"I fear not," she said, sadly. "I fear Gracie is about to be enticed from the pleasant ways of old-maid-hood, into the thorny paths of matrimony—I shall have to come alone. But I am used to being alone."

"But could not you, too, Jeanie, be enticed from the lonely paths you walk in, to join in the life-march of one who loves you with his whole heart?"

She answered evasively. "I shall never find such a one, Mr. Arnold."

The next moment he had caught her hands, and was looking imploringly into her eyes.

"You know I love you, Jean," he whispered. "Can I hope that you love me?"

For one brief moment there was silence between them. They were standing on a little hill just above the house, and the golden glory of the sunset wrapped her from head to foot. For one moment she was still, and he felt her hands tremble in his, then she drew them proudly away. She drew her form to its full height, and the crimson flush came and stayed in her cheek.

"How can you hope, Mr. Arnold," said the scornful, musical voice, "for the love of one who holds herself above her race through her knowledge of her beauty and intellect? Or do you think you are the Pygmalion who is to breathe life into this statue of ice?"

Without another word she turned and left him rooted to the spot. With her slow stately step she walked on, but with blinded eyes. Ah, if he could have seen the burning tears that dimmed those proud brown eyes! When Gracie came to her half an hour later, she was sitting by the window looking off at the hills—the cold, proud Jean she had been a month ago. Grace came up and put her arms around her gently.

"Here is a note, Jeanie, Mr. Arnold asked me to give you. He says he has changed his mind and will go on the early morning train—Mrs. Barnes said tea would be ready in ten minutes—Hurry down." And she flitted down-stairs again. Left alone, Jean took up the note with cold, trembling fingers. It was short.

"Jean, I know now, of course, that you heard all my senseless speech on the evening of your arrival, and I also know that you must have been acting a part all through the past month, in order to lure me to your feet only to spurn me as you have done this eve. Well! You have had your revenge, and I my well-deserved punishment. But is the revenge a sweet one, Jean? Do you feel it to be one worthy of your noble nature? I shall leave without seeing you again, but if ever you feel that you have forgiven me, and feel also that you need forgiveness, return to me this withered rosebud I enclose, and I will come to you."

Poor Jean! How humiliating this was to her proud nature only God and her own soul knew, and yet she felt it to be justice. She had played a skillful game that summer, but had quite forgot in her eagerness to win that there was danger to herself,

and now she was compelled to acknowledge to herself that she had not altogether conquered. There was more bitterness than sweetness in this cup of revenge she had compelled herself to drink to its dregs. Ah, how deeply she felt this in the weeks that followed, when she was alone so much while Rob and Gracie were together. She was truly glad when the vacation was over and she could go back to the dull routine of her school duties. There, through the lonely winter months, she struggled with this new sorrow that had come into her life. But still pride held the upper hand, and would not let her do as her heart prompted her. Gracie was not teaching this winter, but preparing for her marriage, so Jean was more alone than ever.

One evening she came from school, worn and weary with an unusual day's work, and walking hurriedly along, almost ran against a gentleman who, equally absent-minded, had not seen her. A quick apology from both, and then lifting his hat he turned away, but not until she had recognized Ross Arnold. He evidently did not know her. With that one glimpse of him after so long, her eyes were opened and she knew she loved him—knew that hers had been the losing side in that summer's game. Long and hard was the combat between love and pride that night, but at last, mid swiftly falling tears, the withered rosebud was taken from her desk, and, sealed in an envelope, was dropped by her own hand in the office. But, alas! through all the weary days and weeks that followed, there came no answer, and at last her heart sank in despair. It was only *just*, she thought. It was his hour

for revenge as it had been hers, and she must meekly accept it. From that hour there was a great change in Jean. Her whole nature seemed purified and exalted by suffering, and she "kissed the rod that smote her." The children, who had hitherto only feared their stately teacher, learned to love her, and she found good and true friends among many who had shrunk from her before. At last the weary winter was over, and she turned her tired feet again toward her summer home with Mrs. Barnes; though it made her heart ache to think of the change there would be from last summer.

On the day of Jean's arrival, she was so tired and overcome, that she kept her room until late in the evening, when she took her guitar and went out on the veranda. Almost unconsciously her fingers strayed among the strings until the sad strains of "Auld Lang Syne" broke the stillness, and the sweet voice, broken with emotion, took up the words. Suddenly a deep bass voice joined it, and looking up she saw Ross Arnold standing within a few feet of her.

"Jean," he said, "I was in Europe when the rosebud reached me. Does it mean that you have forgiven me—that you can love me?"

Her only answer was to extend her white trembling hand, and in an instant his arms were around her. There was no need of further explanations. They thoroughly understood each other now, and neither have ever regretted the "game" they played that summer, though it brought much tribulation to both hearts before they reaped their golden harvest of joy.

A MISUNDERSTANDING.

BY LOUISE DUPEE.

"O Tommie, if you only would go into the kitchen with your playthings!" said Huldah, pleadingly. "The baby cannot go to sleep with all this noise in his ears. Singing school must have commenced already, and I never shall get there, never!"

"The kitchen is cold, and my lungs are 'fected," said Tommie. "I shouldn't wonder if I had the 'sumption. Ma said I must stay by the fire, anyway."

"But can't you keep still for one moment? O, you're such a trouble to me, Tommie!"

"Well, Sam's Sunday-school book says that troubles is good for peepul, makes 'em better. Grandpa was 'splainin it just now, and Sam didn't remember, and I did, so grandpa gave me peppermints. I want to make you better, Huldy, that's why I holler and make you tell Roberson Crusoe two times when I wont go to sleep at night; that's why I drum, when the baby wont go to sleep."

Poor Huldah! she thought if trouble made people better she must be on the eve of being translated, on account of her virtues.

"You needn't think Jack Long 'll come and take you to singin' school, Huldy," remarked Sam, who announced his approach by blowing a loud blast on a shrill tin whistle. The baby started up with a scream. Huldah looked anxiously at the clock, but restrained her desire to seize him by the collar.

"Why don't you ask me why?" remarked this gentle youth, after a little interval of silence.

No answer from Huldah, in whose soul a faint hope was dawning. The baby had closed its eyes, and crammed its little red fist in its mouth.

"Well, I told him the schoolmaster was goin' to keep you company, there," he revealed, with a triumphant giggle which made the baby start again.

"O dear! Huldah, how could you forget to mix my drops?" groaned her mother from the sofa; "my head is worse than ever, but nobody seems to have the least consideration for me. It does seem to me that you

might keep those children a little more quiet."

"I am sorry I forgot, mother," said Huldah, in a voice that was full of tears. "I'll mix them now, if Sam will rock the baby. Sam, if you'll be good and rock the baby gently, and keep quiet yourself, I'll give you something nice."

"How often have I told you, that you mustn't hire your little brothers?" remarked Mrs. Holmes, sharply. "It's a pity you hadn't a little gumption in managing them."

Sam commenced to clamor for money, and Tommie insisted with a scream, that he would undertake that little business transaction himself.

"Allow me to assist you," said the schoolmaster, in a tone full of sympathy. He had entered the room unperceived, and was regarding Sam in a way which made that sturdy youngster tremble.

"Thank you, Mr. Simmons, you are very kind. I thought you had gone to singing school." And she allowed him to take her place beside the cradle, a little amused, in spite of her afflictions, to see how funny he looked rocking a baby. But he did it to some purpose, and baby was soon in the deepest of dreamlands. Sam dared not whistle under the influence of his awful eye, and in spite of himself Tommie was beginning to grow sleepy.

"I'm too tired to make you good any more to-night, Huldy," he announced, rubbing his eyes. "Say, is the schoolmaster waitin' on you, coz Aunt Mriar she said so. What is waitin' on anybody?"

When the effect of this speech had somewhat died away, Mr. Simmons said to Huldah, "You haven't given up going to singing-school to-night? I took the liberty to wait for you, and it's not too late yet."

"I am so sorry you should have waited," said she, earnestly. "You will have lost so much. Then the schoolhouse is so near I don't mind going alone."

"O dear!" she thought, "Why couldn't he have gone alone? What will Jack think? How could that dreadful boy have told him that I was going with the schoolmaster, and everybody is saying that he is waiting on

me, just because he thought to board her! If I can only see Jack alone for a few moments, I will manage to let him know that there isn't a shadow of truth in the story." Then a little doubt crept into her mind; and made her miserable. Did Jack care for her as she did for him, or had the affection which he entertained for her when she was a little girl died out with the years? When he used to tell her that he liked her better than anybody in the world, and that he should always do so, that there was no girl in all South Harbor that began to have such red cheeks or such bright eyes. Of course he hadn't said so much as that to her since she had grown up. It wouldn't have been proper unless they were engaged, but then he had said a good deal, and looked more than he had said, when he went away six months before. He was first mate of the *Mary Susan* now, and was only home for a few days, and how she had looked forward to his coming! It was quite dreadful to think he had been in the place nearly four hours and she had not seen him at all.

After the morning's biscuit had been set to rise, Tommie's playthings were picked up and stowed away in the closet, more drops mixed, and the sleep-softened Tommie, himself, coaxed into bed, Huldah was free to go to singing-school if she liked. And she *did* like, though it was nearly recess time, and the kind but provokingly attentive schoolmaster *would* wait to accompany her, for Jack Long would be there, and a sight of his face would do her good. She had no time to arrange her curls or pay any of those little attentions to her toilet which, as Jack was going to see her, she longed to do.

"I look cross, and homely, and heated," she said to herself, as she took one hurried wistful look into the glass. But when she came down stairs with her little red hood tied turban-wise over her dark braids, the glance which the schoolmaster gave her told her that his eyes saw differently.

"They're singing *Merry May*, and that's always the last thing before recess," said Huldah, as she and her companion entered the dusky little hall of the schoolhouse. Almost every seat in the room was filled, and everybody turned to look at them when they went in, more than one smiling significantly, for it was a fine moonlight night, and lovers like to loiter under such skies.

Jack Long didn't look though, after one

quick sidewise glance, but he saw who they were, and colored a little under his brown skin. Then he commenced to be amazingly attentive to Del Stevens, who sat by his side flushed and smiling, and looking triumphantly at poor Huldah. For her part, she would rather have had the schoolmaster, but she knew that Huldah preferred Jack Long, and was delighted to have her see how thoroughly that gentleman appreciated her fascinations. They didn't attend to the singing at all, but whispered continually with their faces unnecessarily near each other, Huldah thought. Once Huldah met Jack's eye and bowed to him across the room, and he returned such a careless indifferent little nod, that it almost broke her heart. "He's forgotten me, and fallen in love with Del Stevens," she sighed, "but Del Stevens is such a flirt."

She thought he would surely come over and speak to her at recess, but no, he clung to Del's side, as if he intended that nothing should ever part them. Once when she happened to be near him, he leaned over Del's shoulder, and asked her if they were all well at home.

"Well as usual, thank you," she answered in a faltering voice.

"I'm glad to hear it; I shall call before I go," he said, carelessly.

Huldah's pride began to be aroused. Hitherto she had been sad and silent, for when her heart was sad, this innocent young woman had never thought of acting as if it were otherwise, but now it flashed over her all of a sudden that she was behaving very foolishly, that she was allowing Jack as well as everybody else in the room to see that she was feeling badly, because he saw fit to pay court to Del Stevens, and that it would never do in the world. So she swallowed the lump in her throat, and after a mighty effort succeeded in being gay, or seeming gay, at least. She brightened up wonderfully, she made funny little jokes, she laughed, her eyes flashed, and her cheeks were scarlet. Mr. Simmons was delighted. He had been oppressed by her sadness, and thinking it the result of overwork, and weariness, and worry, for Huldah's mother with that endless headache, and those dreadful children were enough to spoil life for any young girl, had been particularly sympathetic and tender in his manner toward her. She was more free with him, more gracious to him than she had ever been be-

fore, and the poor fellow flattered himself, though he was by no means conceited, that the influence of his society had something to do with this sudden lifting of the cloud which hung over her. What a feverish, wretched, weary evening that was! Huldah remembered it with strange vividness to the end of her life. Jack went home with Del, of course. Huldah watched them as they went up the frosty white road with such a lover-like air, and in her heart, said farewell to Jack forever. Once at home, and shut away in her own little room where there were no prying eyes to see her, she gave vent to her wretchedness in a perfect flood of tears. She fully intended to keep awake and be wretched all night. She wondered if she ever should fall asleep peacefully and happily as she used to do, when, after a prayer which was more for Jack than herself, and a parting glance at the sea, which held him somewhere on its broad bosom, she sank into such sweet slumbers and dreamed of him. She could not pray, now, her heart was too full of bitterness. Everything had gone wrong with her, and God did not help her, or care for her. But, after all, she had not been in bed fifteen minutes before sleep hung heavy on her eyelids and everything was forgotten in its dimness, even Jack.

The next day was Sunday, a bright golden November day, and Huldah felt a little more inclined to live than she had on the evening before, when she came down stairs in the morning. Her mother's headache was still raging, Tommie had crept into the baby's crib and was sticking pins into its plump bare arms, and Sam was drawing a picture of the schoolmaster and herself as they appeared on their way to singing school, with which to adorn the breakfast-table.

"O, if I could only go to church this morning!" thought Huldah. "I should see Jack, and—but it's of no use," putting the pleasant picture out of her mind, "mother's head aches, and I dare say Jack will go to church with Del, things seem to have gone so far, and he wouldn't walk home with me, after all."

"Huldah," said her mother, appearing from the bedroom, "I believe I shall try and go to church this morning. My head aches fearfully, but it's likely the air will do me good, if I don't have Sam and Tommie to worry me. I shall leave them at home with you, and I wish you would see that

they get their Sunday school lessons. Tommie does make such funny work with that question book, it distracts me to try and beat anything into his head. I guess the baby's going to be real good to-day."

"Very well," said Huldah meekly, taking up that lusty infant, who looked vengeance at her out of his lashless wide-awake eyes, in contradiction of his mother's premature statement.

That was a dreadful day to Huldah, but she struggled bravely through it, trying to perform all her duties faithfully. She helped to prepare breakfast, and dinner, and supper, she washed the dishes, she took care of the baby who screamed his worst from dawn till dark. She heard Sam say his verses over twenty times, and held Tommie resolutely by the arm while she endeavored to drill the answers of the three questions which comprised his Sunday school lesson into his obstinate and heedless little head. She dressed both boys, faithfully exploring their pockets and abstracting everything therefrom, which might detract from their piety, and that of their fellow-pupils in Sunday school.

But, after all, she only received severe rebukes for careless neglect from her mother, as it was reported that Sam produced three live frogs from his pocket in the midst of the prayer, and that Tommie made the children laugh, and shocked everybody, by the dreadful answer he gave to one of his questions.

The question was, "Why cannot we see God if he is always present?" The answer was, "Because God is a spirit, and we cannot see him with corporeal eyes."

Tommie had it, "'Coz we're spirits, and God has copper eyes!"

And in the meantime the world was as bright as if there wasn't any trouble in it. All the young people were out in holiday attire, and the sunshine was as golden and the air as balmy as if summer had stolen back to make a little visit before the snow covered the hills, and made the ground too chill for her feet. Jack Long went home from church with Del Stevens, and remained at her house to dinner. Del's little sister Ellen told Sam so, and Sam made haste to reveal the news to Huldah, divining that it would tease his sister, he could hardly imagine why.

Night came at last with its hush, and starlight, and peaceful atmosphere, but

there was little quiet in the Holmes household, no peace in Huldah's heart.

"I don't feel like bein' good, and goin' to sleep to-night," announced Tommie, at the supper-table. "I spects I shall have to have as much as free fairy stories—giant stories, I mean, after I'm in bed, Huldah."

Huldah's heart sank within her, for if Jack Long was ever coming to call, he would come to-night, and he would come early, he always came early. Tommie's threats were by no means empty ones; he often kept her by his side until nine o'clock, condescending to be calm and quiet while the wonderful adventures of Jack and the Bean Stalk, or the startling career of Jack the Giant Killer and Puss in Boots were thrilling his wide-awake ears. But if hapless Huldah were to refuse to dance attendance on him, and leave him to grope his way into dreamland in the stillness and the dark, all the neighboring echoes would be aroused by his cries, and the baby startled into such a degree of wakefulness, that it was doubtful if he ever slept again!

"If it wasn't for the baby, you might leave him, and let him scream as long as he likes," Mrs. Holmes used to say. "There's no sense in waiting on a great boy like him with such devotion. But, dear me, I don't know how we're going to help it, as it is. One of his dreadful shrieks is enough to frighten the baby into fits, and you know you haven't a bit of tact in managing him, Huldah."

So nothing remained for Huldah to do but to be the devoted slave of this powerful infant. If he wished to hear Jack the Giant Killer three times in succession, she must be at his service. On Sunday nights his tastes seemed to run in the direction of giants, particularly. Bible stories were too tame for him, after a day of comparative quiet.

With feelings of thankfulness Huldah saw that baby's eyes were already beginning to grow narrow and dim, for the earlier the baby was disposed of, the earlier she might dispose of Tommie.

"Hope told a flattering tale," however, for what with Tommie's popgun, and the new and delightful way of whistling through his fingers which Sam had just become master of, the young man brightened and became really hilarious. At half past six he manifested no intention of sailing for "Noddle's Island."

Huldah sighed, and endeavored to persuade him to keep his head on the pillow, while she rocked and hushed him.

"Dear me," said her mother, "you've no feeling for children whatever, you are always so anxious to get baby out of the way, no matter how good he is. Now, if it wasn't for my headache, I should enjoy their merriment. I guess you'll have to take Tommie and baby up stairs, though, for I am beginning to have that cutting pain in my temple; and Sam, if you are going to whistle any more, you must go into the kitchen."

Huldah departed for the upper regions, bearing baby on her arm, and dragging Tommie after her, who objected to going. An hour passed away. Baby was still looking about him with calm unwinking eyes. Tommie, who had smuggled a knife into the bedroom, had cut his finger, and was screaming lustily. Another half hour passed, and baby had suddenly yielded his dimpled self into the arms of sleep. Tommie, in bed, was clamoring for the "Seven Champions of Christendom," refusing to listen to the milder warfare of any of the Bible heroes instead, if it was Sunday night.

"Why didn't you come down to see Jack Long, Huldah?" said Sam, appearing on the scene with a provoking giggle.

"Jack Long! is he here?" exclaimed Huldah, the color flashing into her cheeks. "O Tommie, couldn't you go to sleep without me just this one night?"

"But he's gone now. He staid over an hour, and kept a lookin' towards the door all the time, as if he spected somebody. Then he looked kinder glum, and said he must go. He's gone to set up with Del Stevens, I'll bet my new pistol he has!"

"Why didn't any one tell me he was here?" demanded Huldah, desperately. "Where was mother?"

"O, she said I'd better not tell you, 'coz she had such a cuttin' pain in her temple she couldn't hear any more of baby's or Tommie's music to-night, and they could not have gone to sleep, 'coz if they had you would have come down, anyway."

Huldah burst into a passion of tears. Sam went down and reported that Huldah was cryin' 'coz she didn't see Jack Long. Mrs. Holmes looked amazed, the school-master colored with distress. But when Huldah appeared fifteen minutes later, they

concluded that Sam must have been mistaken, for there were no traces of tears on her face, and she looked quite bright and cheerful.

Miss Quimby, a neighbor, dropped in on her way home from evening meeting. After complaining of the low state of religion, this lady opened a little budget of news.

"They say Jack Long and Del Stevens is going to make a match. He didn't come away from there last night till one o'clock, and brought her a handsome Injy scarf that cost more money than he can afford to spend. They went to ride this afternoon, and he's there to-night, I make no doubt. I wonder at his makin' up to her, for I never set no store by Del, and he's a good likely fellow as ever lived, though he may be a little careless and unconcerned as regards religion. His mother, I know, don't 'prove of the match. They say she set her heart on you for a daughter-in-law, Huldah; but then, if Jack thinks different, I don't know what she can do about it. I used to think 'twas all settled between you and him."

Huldah colored, but could not speak.

Mrs. Holmes opened her eyes with amazement. She had been so absorbed in herself for so long, that she had never dreamed of Huldah's having any other interest than her sickness, and the little cares and pleasures of every day. Huldah was almost a child—what right had she to think anything about love affairs, when she was needed so much at home? O, the selfishness of some mothers!

"Nonsense!" she exclaimed. "There was never anything between Huldah and Jack Long. Huldah isn't old enough to be engaged. I don't see how anybody could get such an idea as that." But for all that, she was beginning to be a little enlightened concerning her daughter. Huldah was grateful to Mr. Simmons all her life for turning the subject with so much tact just then. In spite of all she could do, the tears would come into her eyes, but he drew their attention from her by giving some wonderful little piece of village news, which, strange to say, Miss Quimby had not heard, and which she swallowed with great eagerness. After that, for many and many long weeks, there wasn't a glimpse of brightness anywhere for Huldah. The burden of labor which she used to bear so cheerfully when the thought of Jack cheered her soul

seemed intolerable to her now. Sam never had been so provoking. Tommie's inventive genius in the way of mischief had increased tenfold; and the baby never would give her even one moment to steal away and enjoy the luxury of lonely tears. How long life looked stretched out before her young eyes, and so dull, and eventless, and bleak, and cold! In another year Jack would come home again, and then he would be married to Del. They would have a merry wedding, and all South Harbor would be invited, she among the rest. But she never could see the marriage, never! It loomed up before her like something more bitter than death all the year. Outwardly, she was the same as ever. She went to singing school with Mr. Simmons, and sang "Merry May" in a voice that had no sound of heartache. Tommie and the baby graciously permitting, she helped trim the church for Christmas, and spent an hour or two at the Christmas festival, laughing and dancing with the merriest. But she rejoiced that her mother's headache prevented her from going to Sue Stevens's party, and that the state of the baby's disposition rendered it impossible for her to go on the sleighing party with Mr. Simmons. That gentleman's attentions, though they were so modestly and delicately offered, were by no means welcome. Still, when he asked her to marry him one soft spring night when they were returning from evening service, she caught a glimpse of Del Stevens, who was just ahead, wearing the India scarf which Jack had given her, and came near saying yes, out of sheer desperation. Why should she not marry him? It would prove to Jack, as well as to the gossips, that she cared nothing for him. Then Mr. Simmons loved her, and he was so pleasant, and looked so gentlemanly, far more so than Jack Long, with his sailor-like roughness and rustic ways. All the girls were envying her his attentions, even Del Stevens, who, forgetful of Jack, was continually inviting him to flirt with her coquettish glances and pretty flattering ways. He was studying to be a physician, and her position in life as his wife would probably be much higher than ever Jack's wife would be likely to attain, for Jack would be nothing but a South Harbor sea captain to the end of his days. But the difference was that she loved Jack, and she did not love Mr. Simmons. It would be doing him a great wrong to

marry him under such circumstances. So she told him that she did not love him, but she wept a great deal over it, and seemed so sorry for him that, in spite of her decided nay, he took hope, and was not utterly downcast. Love is ever hopeful, finding fair skies somewhere beyond the clouded years.

It was October again at South Harbor, and Jack Long was coming home. Del Stevens had the Port dressmaker domesticated at her house, and Huldah could hear nothing but wedding bells ringing in her ears by day and night, wedding bells that made strange discordance on the mellow autumn air, and filled her heart with pain. But she had learned to be patient now. Life was worth living, after all, even without Jack's love, even though he was going to be married to another. The baby's fretful little voice and Tommie's constant society were becoming less wearisome to her. It touched her to notice how lovingly the wee thing's arms clung about her neck, and that the first word it tried to speak was her name, dreadful mouthful though it was. Then Tommie had been sick, and sickness had developed angelic qualities that no one could ever have dreamed to exist in his mischievous little soul. He suffered fearful pain, but bore it all with the patience of a martyr, if only Huldah would sit by his side. He would swallow the most nauseous compounds, if they were dealt to him by her hand, and never asked for or seemed to think of any one but her. Huldah remembered every cross word she had ever spoken to him then, and thought if he were only well again, his most atrocious mischief would be even entertaining. He was just beginning to run about now, with a white wasted face, and great wistful eyes, the only thing about him that looked like Tommie, his funny little pug nose.

It was a soft rosy twilight. The harvest moon had not yet arisen from her bed in the sea, but a star glittered like a teardrop on the fading cheek of the sunset. Huldah had been on an errand to the store, and was returning by the shore road. It was long and lonely, but some fascination about the sea tempted her to take it. The lighthouse lamp threw its ghostly glimmer on a cluster of strange sails. In the morning the harbor had been clear. She wondered, with a sudden thrill at her heart, if Jack's vessel might not be there among the rest, as he was expected daily now.

"But it is nothing to me whether he has come or not; Del is going to be his wife, and 'there's nae room for twa.' O Jack, Jack!" she said, unconsciously giving voice to her thoughts.

But for all that, she climbed a rock which stood by the wayside, and was straining her eyes to discover the vessel through the growing darkness.

"You are mistaken about Del's being Jack's sweetheart, Huldah," said a well-known voice, though it was somewhat changed by some deep emotion. "I didn't imagine that the schoolmaster's sweetheart could take so much interest in my affairs, though. Is it possible that that story was not true, after all, Huldah?"

"What story?" said Huldah, when she had somewhat recovered of the surprise and consternation she felt at finding Jack close beside her, hearing her unguarded words. She had been so absorbed in her own bitter thoughts that she did not notice him as he came towards her.

"Why, the story that you and the schoolmaster are engaged. I heard it from every quarter as soon as I landed last year, and it almost drove me wild, Huldah."

"Mr. Simmons is nothing to me, never was anything to me," said she, in a tone that was scarcely more than a whisper.

"Then, Huldah, wont you let me be something to you, as you are more than all the world to me? Surely you cared for me a little in the old days."

Huldah was silent, she could not speak.

"Wont you speak one word to me? If you only knew what I have suffered for your sake the past year you would not treat me in this way," he said, impatiently, after waiting what seemed to him almost ages, for her lips to move.

"What you have suffered?" she repeated, like one in a dream. "O Jack, what does this mean? What is it about Del Stevens? Everybody—"

"Nothing," said he, interrupting her, "only she is going to marry my mate, George Holmes. He was here at the Harbor a day or two last fall, and I introduced him to her. The result was a leap in love, and they're going to be married next week."

"But the India scarf! didn't you give her an India scarf, Jack? And they all say in the Harbor that she is going to be married to you."

"O, George gave it to her; he bought it

for his sister, but forgot all about her when he saw Del. I bought one just like it for you, Huldah, but when I heard about Mr. Simmons, of course I did not care to thrust my gifts upon you. Will you have it now, and me with it? I don't know what will become of me if you say no. It would be harder for me to lose you now than as if I never had spoken to you again. I thought when I came that I must avoid you—I

could not see you, the wife of another."

For all answer Huldah nestled her head on his shoulder and wept; but when the Mary Susan sailed again both the captain and the mate took their brides with them, and Huldah was never jealous of Del Stevens again, though Jack could hardly be coaxed to shake hands with the schoolmaster, because Huldah told him that she came very near marrying him, after all.

A MONTH IN A GARRET.

Strickland, Ada

Ballou's Monthly Magazine (1866-1893); Aug 1877; 46, 2; American Periodicals

pg. 177

A MONTH IN A GARRET.

BY ADA STRICKLAND.

"AUNTIE NELL," said Ethel, as we sat that evening in the veranda, watching the sun go down in its crimson glory, "what did you mean to-day at the table when you said grandpa knew what it was to live a month in a garret?"

"Wait, Ethel," I said, "till these blue eyes of baby Arthur's close for good-night, and I will tell you and Belle all about it. Sleep, Artie dear—auntie will sing for you." And as the white lids drooped lower, and the long lashes touched the dimpled cheek, I sang the little cradle song my own mother had sung to me in my babyhood, and Arthur slept. Then, to satisfy the questioning eyes turned toward me, I began:

You were never either of you in the house where we lived during the war and I hardly know whether I can describe it so as to make you understand it or not. It was

nothing like this one of your mamma's, Belle. It was a large old-fashioned roomy building with rooms twice as large as any of these. The kitchen and dining-rooms were in an L., that joined the main building, partly closing up one of the windows of a room in the second story—the L. being only one story high. The upper part of the window remained a window as before, with a view of the roof and chimneys of the house, while in the lower part was inserted a panel that would slide back and forth at the will of any one who wished to enter the low dark garret that ran the full length of the kitchen and dining-room. When closed it seemed only a part of the wall. Very few knew of its existence. I am sure none of us children did, until we saw our father enter there. He was what was called in those dark days, Ethel, a "Lincolnite"—that is, he voted

for the election of Mr. Lincoln, and advocated his principles in public speeches throughout his native State. So when against the will of its people, Tennessee was carried out of the Union, he would not give up his principles and advocate the cause of slavery and oppression, and he came to be looked upon with suspicion and hatred, and threats were made against his life. One evening I shall never forget. We were all seated just as we are now, on the veranda in the twilight, my father holding our baby brother in his arms. I was never very far away from him, and I stood now with one arm about his neck. Your mamma, Belle, was sitting on the lower step, with her apron full of flowers which she was arranging for the vases, and yours, Ethel, was poring over a book in the waning light. Our stepmother was buried in her rocking-chair the very picture of contentment. Suddenly we were all startled by the loud tramp of soldiers' feet at the very gate, and the next moment came the clash of their bayonets on the pavement as they halted and made a harsh demand for my father. He placed the baby in my arms, and all unarmed as he was, went down to the gate to meet them. It seemed to us our hearts stood still while that conference lasted. We could not hear a word that he said—only the loud demand of their leader, that he should "say he was a rebel or die." He had great power in argument and persuasion, and these men were all boys who had grown up around him, so it was not long, until he sent them away half-ashamed of themselves and in an excellent humor. But he knew that this could not last. The next who came might be men like those who in a neighboring town a few days before had mercilessly shot down two women who would not tell the hiding-places of their husbands. There was no immediate chance for escape to the Union lines, so that night the sliding panel in the wall up stairs was drawn back, much to our surprise, and the low dark room fitted up for an inhabitant. And there he remained for four long weeks that his feet never touched the soil. He could not stand erect in his prison, and every night the lights were put out and he came out into our room and walked stealthily back and forth to rest his cramped limbs, while one of us watched

from the windows. No ray of light could gain admittance at first, no air; but a few shingles were soon torn off to admit both, and there through the long weary days he lay. We had to be exceedingly careful in carrying his meals to him, as the soldiers were very watchful and suspicious since his sudden disappearance, and over and over again the house was searched for him, one party even sounding the walls with their bayonets. He had one bad habit which he would not give up. He must have his pipe, and very uneasy were we while he smoked, for there was no other man about the place as the soldiers very well knew, and the tobacco smoke might easily have betrayed him. But fortunately it never did, though one day, a soldier came into the kitchen and surprised my sister with my father's pipe in her hand just lighted and ready to carry up to him. With the greatest coolness she placed the stem between her lips and went to smoking as if she had always been used to it, and the soldier went away thinking it, no doubt, the queerest sight he ever saw—a young and pretty girl smoking a battered old pipe. That was your mamma, Ethel, and she was a very sick girl afterward.

During the month in which my father lived in the garret, on a large tree within full sight of our door two men were hung by the soldiers. They were accused of burning a bridge that had been of great service to the army. The only evidence of their guilt was that they lived close to the bridge, and without judge or jury they were condemned and hung. A vacant place on the limb was pointed out to us as the place where my father would hang when they caught him. But they didn't catch him. At the end of four weeks, he escaped with a number of others through the lines to Kentucky, where the flag he loved still waved. They were eleven days and nights crossing the Cumberland Mountains—hiding in the thickets in the daytime, and crawling on their hands and knees, through the night. But at last they reached the flag, and drew the breath of freedom again. Some time I will tell you what became of us who were left behind, but now the dew is falling, and your eyelids too. So good-night all of you.

A PAIR OF BROGANS.

BY W. H. MACY.

My neighbor, old Captain Crosby, has in the attic of his house a motley array of curious things, mostly collected by himself during his numerous voyages to sea. He took me one day up into his museum, as he called it, where I spent an hour in examining, with much interest, such curiosities as shells, marine birds stuffed and embalmed with skill worthy of a professional, miniature canoes and paddles from various islands in the Pacific, and barbaric costumes and weapons in great variety. But one thing which specially excited my curiosity was a half-worn pair of shoes, which had a special place assigned to them at one end of a long shelf. They were brogans of immense size, indicating that the wearer, whoever he was, must have been a man of large understanding. They were apparently made of coarse, half-tanned hide, and had very heavy soles, thickly studded with nails.

"What's the history of those shoes?" I inquired. "Surely you never wore them yourself."

"No, not I," answered the jolly old salt. "I have had them among my collection these thirty years and more, but I shouldn't care to lug such a clumsy load about on my feet. They look very strange to you, of course, but they are the sort of shoes that are worn, or were formerly worn, by the convicts in Australia, who worked in the stone quarries. There's a story connected with those brogans, which I will tell you if you care to listen to it."

Of course I did, and Captain Crosby, who was always ready with a story, proceeded to relate how the queer shoes came into his possession.

When I was mate of the *Ambuscade*, we made our last port at Sydney, before starting for home. It was rather an uncommon thing at that date for American whalers to visit that place, as the port charges and other expenses were high, and ours was the only American ship in the port. Nearly all our crew, being men who had shipped with us by the cruise, took their discharge here, and went ashore to squander their hard earnings as rapidly as might be. The third

mate was the only officer beside myself belonging to the ship, and he and I had the whole care upon us, one of us going ashore every night, while the other staid on board, thus attending to the duty alternately, and doing what little was to be done with the help of the four or five voyagers who had stuck by the ship and meant to go home in her. The captain of course took a roving commission as soon as the anchor was down, and went and came as he chose, spending most of his time on shore.

There were several large English vessels lying at anchor in the port, loading wool and hides, and of course I formed acquaintance with the officers of these ships, for want of any suitable companions from my own country. One evening, when it was my turn on shore, I fell in with Broughton, the mate of the *St. George*, and we went to take a drink together at a little public house near the landing.

This, like all English public houses, had a sign, representing in this instance a sailor throwing his hat aloft, and kicking up his heels in a highly enviable state of merriment, and was known as "The Jolly Tar." It was kept by one Hiram Levy, a lean and hungry-looking Jew, who bore as much resemblance to the regular typical or ideal landlord as he did to the jolly mariner painted on his sign. However, the stand was a good one, and, from its situation at the head of navigation, the house appeared to do a good business.

We were received with a grinning welcome by the obsequious Hiram, and, as neither of us cared to indulge much in fiery liquors, we ordered a bottle of light wine, which was brought to us in a little apartment just off the bar-room. The door of this side room stood open, but curiosity was baffled by a hanging screen of cloth, to be easily pushed aside in passing through, and which hung down to within about two feet of the floor. While we sat at the little table, chatting and drinking our wine, some one came into the bar, and called for a glass of rum in a gruff voice. I glanced toward the screened door, and saw below the screen this pair of brogans, and a few inches of

legs clothed in thick woollen trousers, such as any sailor might be likely to wear. But the brogans were something quite out of the common course. Their size was remarkable, and their build peculiar. Then, too, the brogans themselves were the picture which nearly filled the frame. Had I seen the whole man, I might not have noticed any one part in particular.

"Good stuff that," said the owner of the gruff voice, as he threw the coin on the counter in payment.

"Yes," assented Hiram. "We calls it preety goot."

"I want a bit of tobacky," said the rough voice again.

"Here you are—very nice. I s'pose you be good judge. Come from American ship?"

"No, I belong to the wool-drougher, the St. George."

"He lies," whispered Broughton to me. "There's no such voice as that among my crew."

He took one step from his chair, and pulled aside the screen with his hand, but the brogans were clumping across the floor, and we had only a rear view of the stranger, going out at the street door.

"Hiram, who is that chap?" he asked, abruptly.

"I don't know," answered the landlord. "He says he belongs to the St. George."

"Well, he doesn't, for I ought to know all my own crew, I suppose."

"Vell, I don't know. It's none of mine pliness. He took his drink, and paid his monish like a man."

We returned to our wine, but Broughton declared that he thought he had seen the same man once before at work quarrying stone, dressed in the regular convict's uniform. But he now had on the woollen trousers, as before mentioned, a blue flannel shirt such as most British sailors wore, and a Scotch cap. But the brogans! there they were, and they spoiled his whole make-up.

"He's a runaway convict," said the English mate, summing up the case, "and the Jew behind the bar knows him, too. But he won't let on; he says it's none of his business, and really I think it's none of ours, either. It wasn't good manners perhaps to pull away the curtain as I did, but I couldn't help it when I heard him claim to be a shipmate of mine, for I knew he was sailing under false colors."

A back door was opened at this moment, and two police officers, with their weapons and badges of authority, entered the room where we were sitting, with the air of men who had a right anywhere, and stood not upon ceremony. They scrutinized us closely, but, saying nothing, passed on into the bar.

"Why, Broughton," said I, "I've always heard your countrymen boast that every Englishman's house is his castle."

"Well, we do boast that," he returned, "but I suppose we refer to private dwellings only. It would seem that this is not the case when one keeps a public 'ouse."

"Landlord," said the taller officer of the two, "you've had a customer in here within the last five minutes?"

"N—no, sir. I don't remember," said the Jew. "There's two zhentlemens in the side room, drinking vine."

"Yes, yes," returned the policeman, impatiently, "but there has been another man here, I think, within a few minutes. Come, sharpen your memory, or you may get into trouble yourself."

"There was a man here just now, and took a drink," interposed Broughton, pushing aside the screen. "He has just gone from here not two minutes ago."

"Which way did he go?"

"I did not see him after he passed the door, and I only had a glimpse of him for a single instant, and then his back was towards me."

"Well, what was he like?" inquired the shorter officer, in a sharp tone. "It's useless to ask this Jew publican, but I can tell him his house is spotted, and we shall soon find a way to make him speak the truth, or break up his business."

"Well, sir," said Broughton, "I didn't see the strange man's face at all, but he was a stout fellow, in a common English sailor's dress. I should say the principal feature about him was his shoes."

"That's our man! the very point we wanted to get at. He's probably on board one of the ships in the harbor by this time, and our game is up for the night."

"But who is he?" asked the English mate."

"Who is he? Why, Dick Dyer, alias Joe Johnson, the greatest cut-throat in this colony, and that's saying a great deal. He escaped from the guard day before yesterday. Nobody knows how or where he got the change of clothing. But he couldn't

change his shoes, for no ordinary size will fit him; they always had to be made on purpose for him. He killed a native Australian this morning, out back here on the Paramatta road, to get a little money. We have the full evidence of this from a man who saw the deed, but we are just too late to catch our man tonight. Tomorrow morning we shall begin a regular system, and if he is in Sydney harbor we'll have him."

All this time the Jew had stood scraping his lantern jaws, and looking as stupid as if he did not even understand what was being said. I had followed my English friend into the bar, but I now stepped back to the table to finish my glass of wine. At this moment the back door, by which the officers had entered, opened softly a little way, and one of those brogans stepped in upon the threshold. Then a head was thrust in, a close-cropped head with the Scotch cap topping it,—with a villanous, ugly mouth, and a square, ponderous jaw, and a pair of small, evil eyes looked directly into mine.

"Here he is! here, at the back door!" These words seemed to escape me involuntarily. I was answered with a look of the most deadly hatred and malice, and a long knife was raised and made a fierce stab in the air, and then knife, head, and brogan all vanished. The policemen dashed through the room at my outcry, and Broughton and I, without even waiting to pay our bill, joined in the hunt. We heard the heavy iron-clad shoes go clumping down the pier ahead of us, but on reaching the water-side all was still, and in the profound darkness nothing was to be seen. A single wherry was rowing out, having pulled only a few strokes on her way, but it seemed hardly possible that the convict could have had time to get into her.

"Boat ahoy!" hailed one of the officers. "Who's your passenger?"

"The second mate of the Orpheus," answered a clear, manly voice, but the boat did not stop, she kept on rowing the faster.

The policemen seemed satisfied with the answer, and asked no more questions.

We all looked about, up and down the wharf, and peered into every wherry that was lying idle, but were compelled to admit to each other that we had lost the scent and were all astray. Broughton and I went back to the Jolly Tar and paid our scot, much to the relief of Hiram. We tried to

pump a little concerning his acquaintance with the strange man, but he declined all such knowledge, and his stolid face revealed no more expression than a turnip. I must confess that I felt uneasy in mind about our adventure with this desperado, who seemed to have a mania for crime, and would as soon murder a man as look at him. I recalled that strange, vindictive look which he had given me when he flashed the long knife before my eyes, and felt that I was especially marked as a victim for his vengeance. When Broughton and I left the Jolly Tar, I pretended that it was necessary to go on board early, and thus we parted. I called a water-man, and stepping into his boat, was rowed off into the darkness.

I don't know why I had such a dread—nay, I must call it downright fear—of that particular man, for I was not usually timid, but still I could not get his terrible look out of my mind, do what I would. I did not believe that he had left the pier in the boat that we had hailed, but rather believed that he was still lurking somewhere on shore. And I felt so anxious that I resolved to be very careful about going ashore at night, until I should hear that he had been recaptured and secured. I should be safe enough on board the Ambuscade, for it was not likely that this man knew what ship I belonged to. But then I thought again, if Hiram the Jew was in his confidence, as I feared, he could find my track easily enough. All this may have been very foolish, but I am telling you truly just what my feelings were, and I resolved from that time to go constantly armed, and not to suffer myself to be taken unawares.

Just before I arrived alongside my ship, I saw a wherry drop out from under her quarter, with no one in her but the man who was rowing. But she passed swiftly away into the gloom, and my own water-man soon followed, as I paid him and climbed on board. All was still, and our own boat, which was usually hauled out to the swinging-boom end at night, was now absent. I concluded, as I saw no one, that Mr. Randall, the third mate, had gone to yarn with some crony on board one of the English ships, and, going forward, found there was only one of the boys on board, and he was nodding in the fore-castle, and didn't know of my coming until I woke him.

I walked aft again, intending to descend into the cabin, where there was a hanging lamp lighted, and its rays streaming up through the skylight threw some light upon the objects in the other end of the ship. My heart came up into my throat as my eyes rested upon—the brogans!

Like most ships of her class, the Ambuscade had a round-house built over the rudder-port, close up to the taffrail, with lockers on each side.

The front of the round-house was necessarily cut away at the bottom to allow the tiller to play clear from side to side. And there at the bottom of the paint-locker I gazed upon those everlasting brogans, exactly as I had seen them looking under the screen in the bar-room of the Jolly Tar!

I gathered my thoughts in an instant, and the convict's being so near me must be purely accidental. He was dodging his pursuers, and had come off in a wherry, had seen that all was quiet on board our ship, and had returned to take refuge where he was for the present, intending to shift his quarters when he saw the right opportunity. He felt safe enough from observation for the present, but he had forgotten the opening at the bottom—and his ominous brogans!

The door was closed, and he was probably holding it, as there was no fastening on the inside. I passed carelessly aft, whistling as I went—really to keep my courage up—and stood looking out astern, leaning my body against the door as I did so, and took the opportunity to slip the little hasp softly into the staple, thus securing the door on the outer side.

I had already decided upon my plan of action, for I was determined to make a desperate attempt to capture the fellow, and I was actually alone in the ship with him, if I except the sleepy boy in the forecabin. It was quite uncertain how long before Mr. Randall and the others would return, and I did not dare to wait. If by any chance the outlaw should see and recognize me, there must be a death-struggle at once, and I meant to act while I had him at a disadvantage. I went round to the other closet on the starboard side of the round-house, where I kept some miscellaneous articles on a shelf, and took down a pair of handcuffs, which I put in my pocket. At the same time I silently cut the seizing of the lashing which held the house in its place. Thus

having cleared the way, I went forward and roused the boy Jake, giving him in a few words some idea of what I meant to do, and thus re-enforced, returned to make the final movement. As I came aft again, with my gaze riveted by a sort of fascination upon the brogans, I saw a brawny hand pulling on one of them, while the other lay empty on the deck.

My friend was taking off his shoes, intending to come out and move about without betraying himself by the noise of the hob-nails.

No more time was to be lost. I rushed to the starboard side of the little house, and bracing my shoulder firmly against it, signalled Jake to take his stand at my side and do the same.

"Now!" I whispered; and as our combined strength was brought to bear, the round-house tipped a little.

"Now, Jake!" I cried, this time aloud, and away went the whole structure with a crash over upon its broadside!

"Here, boy, help!" We seized those immense feet and dragged the crippled desperado out from among the wreck, about as wretched looking a specimen of rough humanity as we could hope to see in a day's sail. He was nearly smothered with the contents of the locker, white lead, lamp-black, and verdigris being the principal component parts, for we had lately been painting the ship, and had set all the remnants away on the shelves, while the fall of one heavy paint keg upon him had broken his right arm. He was completely at our mercy, and meaning to keep him so, I had the handcuffs upon him before we went to work to clear the poisonous paint from his head and eyes.

"Ah! it's you, is it?" he said, grinding his teeth with rage as soon as he recognized me. "You're the man I want to be even with some time or other, but I little thought I was so near to you. I see how it was. Curse on those infernal brogans!"

As soon as Mr. Randall returned, we sent word to the chief of police, and before we slept we had the satisfaction of knowing that the notorious felon Dick Dyer, alias Joe Johnson, was safe inside of stone walls.

We had a bit of general average next morning, clearing up the messes of paint and repairing the damages of our battered round-house, but all that was a trifle.

The smeared brogans were left behind,

and as nobody ever called for them, I have taken good care of them ever since as a kind of trophy.

Dick Dyer, as I learned at a later visit to Sydney, was soon executed after he had been thus captured through my means.

Hiram Levy, for harboring him and other runaway convicts, was set to work in the stone quarries, but the Jolly Tar still swung over the door and kicked up his heels for the benefit of a new landlord, who looked as jolly as the sign itself.

A STAR-GAZING EXCURSION.

BY PROF. SERANOS D. PATRIE.

THE grand astronomical event of 1874 was the transit of Venus across the sun's disc. At the preceding transit, in the last century, France took a leading part, and, on the recent occasion, was naturally anxious to maintain her scientific reputation. But the premature deaths of those eminent astronomers, MM. Delaunay and Laugier, together with the disastrous events of 1870-1, raised considerable difficulties. Enterprise was shackled by a straitened budget. The commission, appointed to consider what France could do in this scientific rivalry of all civilized nations, could only decide on sending out four astronomical missions: two in the northern hemisphere, to Peking and Yokohama; and two to the southern hemisphere, Campbell's Island and St. Paul's Island (the St. Paul's in the eastern hemisphere, for there is another St. Paul's in the western hemisphere). This numerical inferiority was compensated by supplying the four missions with powerful instruments, and by appointing two auxiliary missions, one at Noumea and the other in Cochinchina.

Astronomy has recently been complicated by a new mode of observation. Besides the direct study of the object observed, by watching it in the usual way through the telescope, photography has supplied the means of catching instantaneously and preserving the exact image of every phase of an astronomical phenomenon. M. Janssen, at the head of the expedition to Japan, took with him photographers and an instrument called a photographic revolver, which rendered great service by giving good proofs in the stations where the weather was favorable. For the conclusions thence obtained, M. Janssen tells us we must wait. In another year we shall have complete cognizance of the results arrived at by all the missions. At present he only gives an account of the dangers and difficulties he had to surmount, mentioning to what extent his party's combined observations were successful. After the first interior contact of the sun's and the planet's discs, two photographers, each at his instrument, took as many photographs as they possibly could; but the clouds interposed serious obstacles. Just before the

second interior contact, the sky round the sun became almost providentially clear, which allowed the exact instant to be determined with precision. The sky was clouded at the moment of the last exterior contact, which however is of slight importance. But it is not M. Janssen's adventures that we will follow now. Our course is directed towards that lonely spot, so hard to reach and to set foot on, high up (or down) in the southern hemisphere.

The great difficulties of navigation and of material installation on terra firma which it was foreseen would be encountered in the South Seas, induced the commission to confide that task to naval officers, even although they had no long experience in the use of large astronomical instruments. Commandant E. Mouchez, *capitaine de vaisseau*, of whose narrative this paper is a summary, was selected for the honor of conducting the expedition to St. Paul's; an islet isolated in the midst of the vast basin of the Austral seas, the crater of a scarcely extinct volcano, rising from the bottom of the ocean to nearly a thousand feet above the surface of the waters.

St. Paul's is an absolutely sterile rock, uninhabitable, without potable water, without apparent vegetation, frequented only by troops of seals, by flocks of penguins, and other sea-fowl. Every year, during the three summer months, from December to April, a few Madagascar sailors from Reunion (Ile Bourbon) take up their quarters there, to salt and dry some fifty or sixty barrels of cod, which they catch round the island. The weather then is sometimes tolerably calm; throughout the rest of the year the island is scarcely accessible. At every season gusts of wind and squalls are frequent. At the equinoxes they are continuous, acquiring the violence of veritable storms; and this was the intended epoch of the expedition's arrival there.

That ocean, completely unbroken by land over a breadth of two thousand leagues between Africa and Australia, rises and spreads its undulations at full liberty. Consequently the waves acquire dimensions unknown in other latitudes; and they break with violence all round this rock,

which is too small to afford sufficiently sheltered anchorage. In these regions the sky is generally hidden or very cloudy during the windy season, from April to November; whilst thick mists take possession of the entire horizon during summer, when warm winds from the equator replace the polar winds. These particulars, partly obtained from Mr. R. Scott, the learned chief of the London meteorological service, and partly from the Reunion sailors, decidedly proved that the chances of a clear sky at St. Paul's on the 9th of December were extremely small—eight or ten to a hundred at the very most. They were even smaller, according to the experience the mission was about to acquire. Such deplorable conditions of climate, the difficulties of landing, and the probability of damage to the instruments, left, at the moment of quitting France, very little hope of ultimate success. But the perfectly isolated position of St. Paul's in the middle of the Southern Ocean gave such value to the observations that might possibly be made there, as to render it absolutely indispensable that some one should attempt the enterprise, however uncertain the event might be.

In the second week of August, the party, passing through the Suez Canal, reached the Red Sea, which formerly took eight months' dangerous and difficult navigation to arrive at, and which then was but little known, but is now one of the most frequented thoroughfares in the world. Consequently, old sailors never leave the canal without feeling a combined sentiment of admiration and astonishment that so modest-looking a thread of water should have secured such grand results, with still grander consequences in the future. But the extreme rapidity of modern voyages obtained by fast steamers and divided isthmuses is not without its inconveniences for the traveller, whose temperament is not endowed with sufficient elasticity. During the few days required to pass from the chilly climates of Europe to the torrid heats of the Red Sea, the disturbed equilibrium of the vital functions has not time to reestablish itself. Sudden deaths, owing to inflammatory disease and cerebral congestions, are the frequent result. One of their young companions, prostrated without warning by a constant heat of from 97 to 103 Fahr., could only be recalled to life by twenty-four hours' application of ice to the head. It

was doubtless to avoid these accidents that the old navigators adopted the custom of being bled before crossing the equator.

At St. Denis (the port of the Ile Bourbon) they found the government transport, the *Dives*, which was to carry them and their instruments to St. Paul's. The captain of the ship, as well as the fishermen who annually frequent the island, advised them to delay their departure a month, urging the impossibility, at that season, of approaching the rock and landing their bulky stores without damage. The sea then is much too rough and the wind too violent for safety. But as the delay might compromise the preliminaries of observation, Commandant Mouchez, confident in his good luck and his firm resolution to do everything to succeed, started on the day appointed.

A call was made at Mauritius, for the sake of trans-shipping instruments, which would have been hazardous to attempt in the bad roadstead of St. Denis. Advantage was taken of the opportunity to visit Dr. Gill's observatory, the astronomer in charge of the expedition sent out entirely at Lord Lindsay's expense—a noble use of a large fortune, frequent, the commandant observes, in England, but less frequent, we may add, in France. The outlay this time was ill-required; for the sun was hidden by clouds at Mauritius during a portion of Venus's transit.

On the evening of the 9th of September they left Mauritius for St. Paul's. Their fortnight's passage was slow, but they had fine weather until they approached the island. Even within twenty leagues of it, strong hopes were entertained of landing during one of the rare calms of the season; but the disturbing influence which islets isolated in the midst of the ocean always exercise on the surrounding atmosphere was felt as they drew nearer. On the morning of the 22d it blew a gale, with continual showers of hail and rain; the horizon was completely shrouded in mist, the waves rose, threatening to drive them past the island without their seeing it. By skillful seamanship they managed at sunset to drop anchor about four hundred yards from the breach in the cliff by which the sea has made an irruption into the crater.

Nothing can convey an idea of the sombre and savage aspect of the spot thus suddenly revealed to view, and which was to be their

dwelling-place. The evening was darkening fast. At a very short distance rose black perpendicular cliffs, from seven hundred to a thousand feet high, whose sharp peaks tore the clouds which drifted with extreme rapidity overhead. The wind, accompanied by snow and hail, rushed in violent squalls into the basin of the crater, raising, as it eddied round it, columns of spray fifty or sixty feet high, resembling waterspouts, which the strangers at first took for an eruption of steam and water from the bottom, bursting from the bowels of the volcano. The Dives labored under these down-pouring gusts, lurching sometimes to one side, sometimes to the other, and tugging at her anchor, although the proximity of the shore rendered the sea tolerably smooth. But, a few cables' length from the ship, enormous breakers were leaping and foaming; the horizon was indented with the notches characteristic of a heavy swell—so restricted was the space of calm water in which they had found a precarious shelter. A few seabirds, the only perceptible living creatures, astonished at the intruders' presence, hovered around them almost within reach, as if inquiring by shrill screams what they wanted.

A glimpse was caught, in the hollow interior of the crater, of ruined roofless huts and pieces of wreck, which augured badly for the future. In the midst of the narrow channel leading into this basin, the vast hulk of an English frigate, the *Megæra*, almost completely high and dry, lay surrounded by numerous fragments, on which the sea broke as if they were a mass of rocks. After resisting the tempests of three or four years, it was about to disappear in the storm which was soon to vent its rage on the new arrivals, and render their position so critical. In short, the most fantastic conceptions of modern artists would fail to give an idea of the picture of desolation which lay before their eyes. And an anxious night only served to show more clearly the dangers and difficulties of their position. The only level spot where the installation of an observatory was possible was a beach of pebbles, the rounded vestiges of the rocky downfall which admitted the sea into the crater, and which was by no means sure not to be covered by the waves in stormy weather. This beach formed part of the edge of the basin, which is the bottom of a circular gulf more than a thousand yards in

diameter, with vertical walls three hundred yards high, to scale which without a rope-ladder seemed impossible. The whole brink of the basin is literally covered with the remains of wrecks. Sufficient firewood was therefore obtainable, but for boiling, at least, it was not wanted.

The commandant visited the principal huts, to select those which could be most easily repaired. On approaching one of them he heard, with surprise, a strange confused noise, and suddenly found himself assailed at the door by a troop of kids (*cabris*), wild cats, rats and mice, making their escape in all directions. Without further examination he thence concluded that this one was less ruined than the other hovels. *He had it cleared immediately of its accumulated filth, to convert it, the very same day, into their principal lodging.*

It was the shipwrecked crew of the *Megæra*, eight hundred men, who built those huts wherever they found sheltered nooks in the rocks; and, at the moment of their departure, effected doubtless very hastily, they must have abandoned considerable stores, which everywhere lay scattered about. The ground was covered with barrels and boxes still full of sundry articles; with masts, ropes, pulleys, household utensils, all sorts of furniture, small rowing-boats, and a strange medley of odds and ends. The sight of those objects, undeniable witnesses of a great disaster, filled the astronomers' hearts with pity, combined, nevertheless, with the satisfactory hope that the said objects, in spite of three years' exposure to the open air, might supply the new arrivals with unexpected comforts. Some boxes, stowed away in one of the cabins, contained several hundred volumes, comprising the principal English, French and German philosophical works of the eighteenth century, treatises of theology, big folios on the canon law, and the *Parfait Notaire*. For some years past rats seem to have been the only visitors of this library, so strangely composed for fishers of cod or for sailors wrecked on an inhospitable rock.

The party found on the circumference of the crater numerous springs of hot water, in which in a few minutes they were able to cook the lobsters caught in great abundance amongst the neighboring rocks. In many spots the soil round their cabins was burning hot at a few inches' depth. By

digging a yard and a half or a couple of yards deep the naturalists of the expedition found a temperature as high as 200 degrees Centigrade, the boiling point of water being 100 degrees. They would therefore have found no difficulty in warming their huts and cooking their food had combustibles happened to run short. The only trace of vegetation perceptible was a tough grass, resembling the "alpha" of Algeria, which barely sufficed to afford a little shelter to the numerous penguins established on the face of the cliff, six hundred feet above the level of the sea.

No attempt appears to have been made by the expedition to follow Captain Cook's example during his voyages of discovery, by endowing the island with natural productions likely to be useful to strangers willingly or unwillingly landing on it. Seeds of the hardier and more succulent grasses and of antiscorbutic and maritime vegetables, as Scotch kale, parsley, dandelion, true samphire, sorrel and the garden cress, might at least have been sown and left to take their chance. Even innoxious weeds, as thistles, would furnish the commencement of a future stratum of vegetable mould. Fern spores, in so damp a climate, might find a congenial home amongst the rocks; whilst artificial hollows would prove useful recipients, at least at times, of the fresh water yielded by the clouds and mists. Vegetation of the kinds possible under the circumstances must precede the naturalization of serviceable animals. Those at present introduced and settled there may be regarded as mischievous rather than otherwise. Rats and mice are the almost inevitable introduction of shipwrecks. A few pairs of rodent-eating owls or hawks might be the most effectual means of keeping them down. Some carnivorous creature is wanted which will not injure the penguins or their young. The cats, as will be seen, are worse than useless. But the most destructive creatures in a spot which wants to acquire or retain its vegetation are goats. In St. Helena they annihilated many species of plants (most interesting, even if not valuable for their uses, because not found elsewhere), which are consequently extinct and lost to the world forever. In the Pyrenees, assisted by sheep and cattle, they have reduced vast tracts of once-wooded mountain to naked, sterile, burnt-up rock.

At St. Paul's those curious creatures, the

penguins, the future companions and the greatest source of amusement to their learned visitors, were so tame and familiar that, in order to walk through their crowded flocks, it was necessary to push them aside with feet and hands in order to avoid crushing them; and even then they did not make way without protesting. If the human strangers sat down amongst them they allowed themselves to be taken up and caressed; after which they went on with their own private affairs as if nothing had happened, except the arrival of a few penguins the more. Extremely slow and heavy in their hopping mode of progression on land, perhaps it is their conscious inability to escape from danger which makes them apparently indifferent to it; for in the sea, where they are exceedingly agile, they would not allow themselves to be approached nearer than a hundred yards. At that epoch, they were occupied with sitting on their eggs. But through what inexplicable motive, with the great difficulty they have in walking, did they select for their hatching-places the summits of cliffs, up which they must climb every day with infinite toil after their return from fishing, and where their young are especially exposed to the birds of prey that make the neighboring cliffs their home? The singular fact remains unexplained, no plausible reason having been discovered for it.

After a rapid inspection of the ground, an attempt is made to land material; but the wind blows and whirls round the tunnel with such violence, that the men can hardly stand upright. One martyr to seasickness begs permission to sleep on shore in company with six fishermen brought from Reunion. The storm increases; the *Dives* breaks, one after another, three anchors out of the four she possessed, and is obliged to run before the wind. She returns, to the delight of the individual left on the island, and manages to land her stores under precarious and difficult circumstances. It would have been convenient and reassuring to keep her lying at anchor off St. Paul's, but the loss necessitates her being sent to Reunion to procure other anchors, with orders to return in December, to carry away the mission after the completion of their tasks.

At three in the afternoon, therefore, of the 4th of October, the *Dives* weighed her last remaining anchor, and disappeared be-

hind the projecting point of the island, leaving the party to their own resources. She started with the beginning of a storm of much the same violence and the same duration as that which burst on them at their arrival, and rendered so difficult the first installation of absolutely necessary requirements—huts to dwell in, a kitchen, an oven, and the distilling-machine to produce fresh water. Sudden squalls fell eddying from the tops of the cliffs, beating the half-built cabins with sledge-hammer blows, knocking in the roofs, scattering the materials, and compelling the workmen to begin again afresh. Hail and rain never ceased; but the brave sailors, instead of being discouraged, only labored all the more manfully; perfect agreement reigned amongst all. They soon got their hands into the new employment, resulting in a few days in a fairly comfortable and solid establishment, permeable only to the heaviest rains accompanied by the strongest gales. It became, however, also the immediate refuge of all the rats, mice and wild cats on the island. Those animals, instead of making war on each other, lived together, unfortunately for their visitors, on the best of terms, feeding only on seabirds and their eggs, and making themselves at home in the new-built dwellings by tasting the provisions and gnawing the clothes.

The naturalists built themselves a very complete habitation and laboratory with the wardrobes, boxes and furniture found among the wrecks. On the 15th they were able to begin in their researches and collections. The construction of the observatory, in the middle of the bank of pebbles spread at the foot of their encampment, took nearly a month. About the 1st of November their five principal instruments were set up in five different cabins; and observations, the study of the instruments, and preparatory trials immediately began. During the month of November squalls were less frequent; the approach of summer made itself felt; but there was no improvement in respect to astronomical work. The warm winds from the equator, which replaced the polar winds, produced intense and persistent fogs, even more adverse to observation than the variable skies of stormy weather, which were often clear for several hours.

In general, from the bottom of their crater they rarely perceived a bit of blue sky. Like all lofty islands isolated in mid-ocean,

the summits of St. Paul arrest the passing clouds and assist their formation; but this island presents a further peculiarity which is still more unfortunate for astronomers. The numerous hot-water springs which break out all round the basin keep up a constant evaporation, which, rising as if from the bottom of a caldron, is condensed into mists by contact with the cold external winds. In October, these are frequently dispersed by gales, whilst in the calms of summer they close the crater with a permanent lid, hiding the zenith even in the finest weather, and when the sun is shining brightly within a few hundred yards all round the island.

These conditions threatened to be disastrous for observers on the 9th of December. One sole hope sustained them, namely, the Madagascar fishermen's belief in the moon's favorable influence. They hold that there is always a short brightening up of the weather on the day of the new moon; and at the two previous lunations the singular fact had been remarked with great satisfaction, because this 9th of December was precisely a new-moon day. Unfortunately, as the critical moment drew near, the weather got worse and worse. On the 6th, falling barometer, sky completely clouded. On the 7th, high wind, rain and mist. On the 8th, the eve of the transit, barometer still falling, torrential and incessant rain, sea rough; a fishing boat arrived the day before, broke her anchors and was driven out to sea; the whole island enveloped in haze so thick as to hide the opposite sides of the crater; impossible to repeat the last general rehearsal of the observation with every individual at his post, so heavy and continual was the rain. Although all chance seems absolutely and irrevocably lost, the preparations are continued all the same. At midnight, two hundred and fifty Daguerreian plates are ready to be polished and sensitized at the last moment. The party go to bed down-hearted, with the sky as black, the rain as heavy, and the barometer as low as ever. Despair is the prevailing sentiment.

The Madagascar weather-rule seems on the point of refutation, when at three in the morning the wind suddenly shifts from northeast to northwest, producing a great improvement in the weather. The rain ceases; the dark veil which covered the sky is torn; big masses of mist and low-hanging clouds, driven by a fresh breeze, continually

cross the zenith, allowing frequent glimpses of the sky. The barometer rises just a trifle. At sunrise, they run to the instruments; the last preparations are quickly finished, and at 6.30, about half an hour before the first contact, everybody is at his post, perfectly ready to play his part, which had been well defined and studied beforehand.

The first contact, the least important of the four, was almost completely missed, i.e., not determined within forty or fifty seconds; but as Venus continued her progress on the sun the clouds became fewer and fewer, the sky more transparent, the images of exceeding sharpness. About a quarter of an hour after the first contact, when half the planet was still outside the sun, the whole disc of Venus was suddenly apparent, encircled by a pale halo brighter towards the sun than at the planet's summit. Was it an illusion? The micrometer answered, No. This appearance, as remarkable as unexpected, may be attributed partly to the solar atmosphere rendered visible by contrast, and partly to the atmosphere of Venus. The sky had become so pure after the tempest, and the aureole was so brilliant, that traces of this curious phenomenon are visible on the photographs taken.

The second contact was observed under good conditions. From half-past seven till eleven they followed Venus's transit across the sun, which was very rarely obscured by clouds. The gusts of wind, however, which shook the equatorial, proved troublesome. Five hundred good photographs were taken in four hours. The clear state of the sky was so exceptional that the third contact was impatiently awaited, lest rains and mists should return to spoil it. Had they been able, the astronomers would have hurried the planet's progress; but as time and tide wait for no man, so no man can hasten them. At three minutes past eleven the third contact was observed under as favorable conditions as the second. Success was assured; and it was time it should be. The clouds came on, more and more dense and crowded; and the fourth contact, of less consequence than the two preceding, was only with difficulty observed through the haze. At noon it was just possible to take the sun's passage across the meridian to fix the time of their observations; but he was barely visible, and a few minutes afterwards

the pouring rain of the preceding night, accompanied by fog, returned. The storm was not over, but had only lulled during the five hours of the planet's transit. It lasted for thirty-six hours afterwards. The island had simply been in the centre of a cyclone. The rain had ceased an hour before and recommenced a few minutes after the phenomenon. The Dives had returned the day before, and was therefore ready to take the observers away.

During December the naturalists had gone to explore the Isle of Amsterdam, where thick fogs kept them prisoners for several successive days in the grotto which they had chosen for their domicile. Nevertheless, the results of their excursion and the documents they brought back possess very high interest. The interior of this islet, so difficult of access, never having been visited by any scientific mission, they accomplished a veritable voyage of discovery.

December was signalized by a curious final fact. After a high tide, they found stranded on the rocks a gigantic calmar (a species of cuttle-fish), whose body was more than five feet and its arms nearly twenty feet long. An enormous parrot's beak, big round protruding eyes, and multiple arms covered with countless suckers, fully justified the stories related of the hideous animal. They would have liked to bring it home to France; but it would have taken a barrel of brandy to preserve it whole, and their stock did not permit such prodigality; so they were obliged to be satisfied with the monster's photographs, and with dissecting its most interesting organs.

On January 4th the observers went on board the Dives, after building a commemorative pyramid of stone. Strangely enough, at the moment of quitting this desert island to return to the ways of civilization, no one could help bestowing a glance of regret on the spot they were never to behold again. A Robinson Crusoe life, in spite of its hardships, seems endowed with some mysterious attraction, especially when led in pleasant company. But the island soon disappeared behind its curtain of tempests, and they were returning to give a joyful account of their uncertain object fully attained. Only they sometimes asked themselves whether they had not been the dupes of a flattering dream, instead of being favored by a marvellous reality.

A WIFE'S REVENGE.

BY WILLIAM H. BUSHNELL.

"It is very strange, John, that you should love your brother so very much."

"Why, Isa?" And the young husband looked quite curiously at his blooming wife.

"Because you are so entirely unlike."

"You mean in appearance?"

"No, in disposition, feelings, tastes—in everything."

"I grant that my brother George has dark hair and eyes, while mine are light; that he is tall and uncommonly muscular, and I somewhat the reverse, but there the difference ends. We were only children, have grown up together—perhaps became more closely attached than is generally the case, but I cannot see anything 'strange' in our regarding each other with even more than brotherly love."

"You cannot convince me, my dear husband, that you are in the least alike. Your partiality has deceived you."

"Well, if there should even be such a wide difference as you fancy, is it any greater than in our appearance—yours and mine? And yet both of us would most strenuously deny that any one could love better."

"That is not a fair proposition," she replied, with both a smile and a blush. "The difference between man and wife—what might be called the positive and negative in human nature—is often the first cause of at-

traction. In fact, most of us like our opposites."

"But, to follow out your line of argument, you should have loved George and become his wife rather than mine. Your hair and eyes are of the same midnight hue, and—"

"And there the comparison ends, if you please," she answered, with a little show of feeling, and turning to the piano, began drumming at random upon it to conceal her vexation.

Isabel Darling was not the only one who held such an opinion of her brother-in-law. Those who had known him and her husband the most intimately from childhood would have coincided with her. And though the prejudiced mind of John would not admit of such a thing, yet there never were two characters more distinctly marked than that of himself and brother.

John Darling had always been industrious and saving, steady, punctual in all his engagements, and never known to have swerved from the strictest line of rectitude. George was inclined to be idle—certainly was far from frugal—luxurious in his habits, to call it by the softest name, and envious of his brother's well-merited success.

But John always and strongly defended him—excused his want of labor upon the

plea that his talents ran in another direction—that he would some day marry and become steady—that he was a younger brother, and of course had a natural right to look to him for assistance; and, in general, glossed over everything the world condemned, and called it (the world) critical, harsh, fault-finding, and obtrusive.

But John Darling was deceived. His heart was too open and true to harbor distrust, and, most of all, of the child of the same mother, and one who had been given into his care and tenderness with her latest breath. Beside, the brother had never shown out his true character to him, and he had not the slightest suspicion that he was wearing a false face.

Yet so it was. George Darling literally hated his elder brother for his success in accumulating money—in winning Isabel Maxwell for a wife. The latter was almost more than he could patiently endure. He had loved the girl himself—did still love her, despite the fact that she was now the bride of another, that, too, his own brother, and secretly ground his teeth with anger when compelled to witness the slightest show of affection between them.

Yet nothing of this had ever been shadowed forth by any tangible action. He was a perfect master of himself, had been the foremost to congratulate his brother upon his marriage, was all respect to the young wife, and endeavored in every possible way to impress the world that he worshiped his brother, looked up to and honored him, and that there never could be a stronger bond of union.

This John Darling recalled to the memory of his wife, and asked her to point to a single thing that would substantiate her assertions. She could not do so, and he laughed at her for being jealous of his own brother!

Still, for all her failure in defending her position, she did not change her opinion. Each of us have felt at some time in our lives when some certain person approached us, when forced into his or her society, the same chilling repugnance as when a snake crawled across our path. And so Isabel felt when George Darling was near, and, battle with herself as she would, she could not conquer it until months had passed, and his steady, respectful, and affectionate course toward her forced a change in sentiment, and, at least, made suspicion slumber.

The young wife loved her husband with

all the intensity and depth of a first passion. He had raised her from almost poverty to wealth and luxury—was all love and tenderness, and made her happiness and tastes his constant study. She was a woman of strong passions—would hate as she loved, and sometimes flashes from her eyes, cold and sharp as steel, told that if driven to extremity, she would not hesitate to revenge herself in the most summary manner.

Nothing of this, however, was ever shown out to her husband. She was far too deeply in love with him for that—held him in too much respect—owed him too deep a debt of gratitude, and their stream of life flowed on unbroken by any counter currents or rocky breakers. And this grew to be more and more the case when her views with regard to his brother had changed, and so she freely acknowledged to her husband when the matter was again discussed.

"Our daily intercourse has convinced me that I was in the wrong, my dear," she said, "with regard to George; and though I can still see a wide difference between you, yet I have not the same feelings as immediately after our marriage."

"I knew I was in the right—that your better judgment, my darling, would lead you to agree with me," he replied, well pleased. "And that was one strong reason why I wished him to come and live with us. And now, Isa," he continued, playfully, "you will perhaps also acknowledge that you were very jealous of him."

"And I would be now if he were a woman, other than your sister—certainly if mine," she replied, with a smile; but it was one which, if carefully analyzed, would have appeared anything but flavored with honey.

The subject was dropped and never again alluded to—was not a particularly pleasant one for either; and though Isabel might at times have watched her brother-in-law closely, she could find nothing upon which to base an unfavorable opinion, and at last it passed altogether from her mind, and she grew to love the brother next to her husband.

Thus a year passed to the truly happy family. Then a little cloud arose in their sky. Business complications rendered it absolutely necessary for John Darling to go to the far West in order to make an effort to save something out of the wreck of many of his customers. Had not so very large an

amount been at stake he would not have given it a thought—would far sooner have seen a few thousands slip from his fingers than to have been separated from his wife for even a few weeks. And it was with a sad heart that he told her of the necessity of absence.

"Why not let George go?" she asked, with the color fading from her beautiful face as she thought of the many dangers that might be encountered.

"I have thought of that," he answered, putting his arm lovingly around her waist and drawing her to a seat upon his knee, "but he could not accomplish the end. It is absolutely requisite that I should be there in person. Yet sad as it is to leave you, my darling Isa, there is still some little comfort. I shall not be forced to be very long away, and my brother will be here to cheer and guard you during my absence."

"You shall not go alone," she returned, positively. "You might be sick—some accident—ah, heaven!—might happen, and you among strangers."

"Your love, Isa, magnifies the danger," he answered, though pleased at such a demonstration of true affection.

"It does not, and you must let me have my way."

"But you will be very lonely."

"No, I shall be at home, surrounded by friends, and you, dear John—it makes me shudder even to think of it—exposed to countless perils. O John! do not go. I feel as if something terrible would happen. No matter for the money. We have enough without it. Do stay with me."

He consoled her as well as he could, but was forced to acquiesce in taking his brother along with him; and Isabel begged the latter to guard him in every possible manner. He promised to do so faithfully—was more lavish than he had ever been in his expressions of affection, and did very much to quiet her fears.

The fond husband lingered until the very last moment, and then tore himself away from the young wife, promising that he would make many and, if necessary, large sacrifices to secure a speedy return. From various points upon the journey she heard of him—of his successes and failures, and, what was more to her heart, of his continued good health and safety. Several of the letters bore kind remembrances from his brother, and assurances that he would not

forget the trust she had reposed in him, and would guard John with his life, though they had not, and probably would not, meet any danger.

Then came a period of silence—a number of days without a line from either, and Isabel was growing wild with suspense, when a letter, written in a strange hand, was brought to her; and though worded with infinite tact and caution, by way of preparation to the terrible end, it still told of her widowhood—that her husband was dead, and her brother-in-law had been severely wounded in defending him from robbers.

A few days of untold misery followed. Then George Darling brought home the body of his brother, himself weak, and with one arm in a sling, and did all that was in human power to comfort the bereaved one. But it was not until long after the funeral that she could bring herself to even ask him the particulars of the terrible calamity. The blow had been so sudden, and she so utterly crushed by it, that she knew not, cared not but for the single thing that she was alone—that he whom she had loved so well was dead.

As time dried her tears—as she learned to bear more calmly the heavy affliction—to realize the inevitable fact that death will surely come to all, the anxiety grew upon her to learn something more definite with regard to the final hours of her husband, to hear his last words; and her heart was naturally filled with gratitude to his brother, and the more so when the story was told.

It was brief enough when stripped of much repetition and extraneous matter. They had been travelling together upon horseback from one town to another, had just received quite a large amount of money, were passing through dense timber when a number of armed men suddenly attacked her husband, who was some little distance ahead. He (his brother) rushed to the rescue, threw himself before him, and battled until he was severely wounded and fell senseless from loss of blood. What followed he could not tell until he recovered, and found John dying, both having been robbed.

The rest was but a natural sequence. He told how he had taken care of his brother, living and dead, and brought the body home the moment he was in the least able to travel; of how he had endeavored to relieve her of all distracting thoughts with regard to the preparation for the funeral—had

taken charge of the business, would continue to do so, and devote his life to her as he had been charged to do.

"Charged to do?" she asked, looking up through her tears, and speaking for the first time.

"With his dying breath my dear, dead brother gave you into my care—told me to love you as he had done, to fill his place as much as was possible, and ever watch over and guard you."

"My dear husband!"

"Yes, his latest thought was for you—I might say for us, for he died calling down blessings upon both our heads, and thanking Heaven he left enough behind to keep you from want."

"And what I have you shall share, George."

The heart of the bereaved woman was filled with gratitude, and though she could not forget the one who had gone, yet she loved the one who remained better for his dear sake, and confided in and leaned upon him. And so modestly and judiciously did he bear himself, that he extorted admiration from others, and Isabel even came to listen to his praises with pleasure, and speak of the beneficial change the death of John had wrought.

And changed indeed he was to every eye, but most of all when alone. He appeared nervous when his brother was spoken of, and instantly turned the conversation. The physicians said it was a natural result of his sorrow and his wound, but would wear off by degrees. But it did not appear to do so, and he secretly drank to excess. Secretly, for no one was the wiser. And he maintained his good name, and grew more and more into the heart of his sister-in-law, until he boldly asserted his love, and gained her consent to make him as happy as she had his brother, he proving by the most earnest words that it was the only way he could fully carry out the wishes of that brother.

There was no effort to keep the engagement a secret. It very soon became known, and was, of course, freely commented upon, each view of the case having its strong adherents. But none failed to see or deny that George Darling grew more and more nervous, more subject to fitful startings, as the wedding-day drew near, and the censorious and superstitious would have said that the ghost of his brother was haunting him.

And certainly his eyes had such a look; at least they wore an uneasy expression, and his manner was restless, changeful.

Isabel noticed this as well as others, and smiled at what she deemed his fear of her, the timidity with which he would enter the marriage state, and thought how she had at first wronged him, and pity made her woman's heart beat still more tenderly toward him.

The marriage ceremony was performed, and the house filled with guests. The tables were loaded, and the cellars thrown open. It was in the days of deep drinking, and those who were temperate at other times could indulge freely then and nothing be thought of it. And this latitude was allowed even to the husband, and George Darling was not slow to drink the health of his beautiful bride, loosening all the reins he had hitherto kept tightly drawn over both his appetite and his conduct.

The result soon became apparent, and at a late hour he staggered to bed and threw himself heavily upon it, knowing nothing of the white-robed figure there. Mortified and disgusted, Isabel drew herself away, and was about to seek other quarters when the mutterings of the drunken man caught her ear, and she bent over him and heard the horrible secret that he had killed his own brother! The wife of the one, the bride of the other, sat in wide-eyed astonishment, in speechless terror, as he fitfully told the unnatural story of how he had long been determined not only to win his brother's wealth, but his wife; that he had shot him dead, wounded himself, taken possession of the money, and forged the tale he had told.

"Gold, gold," he muttered, "it is mine, all mine, and Isabel is mine, too."

The riotous guests, who were still keeping up the revel below, were startled by the report of firearms, rushed into the bridal chamber, found George Darling dead, with a pistol still clutched in his hand, and Isabel crouched upon the floor with the face of a maniac.

There were no questions asked of her even at the inquest. For her every heart bled. The situation of the dead man, the pistol, were proof enough of suicide, and such was the verdict. Heaven alone knows the truth, and when the veil is lifted may not great wrongs and a long life of suffering prove sufficient to counterbalance a great crime?

"A FINE THING FOR GRACE."

Chester, Cora

Ballou's Monthly Magazine (1866-1893); May 1877; 45, 5; American Periodicals
pg. 425

"A FINE THING FOR GRACE."

BY CORA CHESTER.

THAT was what they all said about it when the engagement was announced, and as "they," in this instance, represented the combined wisdom of Grace Ludlow's numerous relatives and friends, it should be admitted as a fact, I suppose, that it certainly was a fine thing, and she a girl to be envied, upon reaching the *ultimatum* of any sensible woman's most ardent desires.

Here were social elevation, wealth, a fine

establishment, unlimited credit at all the up-town houses—in short, a vision of future bliss only marred by a slight encumbrance—a husband.

Grace had thought very little of the encumbrance. In fact, busy aunts, a "papa" upon the brink of bankruptcy, and crowds of younger sisters, had scarcely given her time to think at all. She had heard a thousand times of all the advantages of the

grand match. First, like Satan, they had shown her all the worldly possessions that should be hers; then, failing to rouse her to a sense of her own brilliant future, had pathetically represented the desperate state of things at home—that home where to strangers all spoke of unlimited wealth and domestic happiness. “Papa” talked desperately of a final crash, hinted at suicide, and even spoke of a shroud and coffin as being the only articles he now desired from an ungrateful world. “A few thousands would save him, yet he expected no sacrifice from others, he who had sacrificed his life for his family. He scorned to force his daughter to a thing of this kind—she must choose for herself, etc.”

Blanche and Flo, Grace’s younger sisters, thought, of course, as most of us do, only of self, and talked in high glee of the great wedding, their bridesmaid dresses, and how nice it would be not to have all of them old maids.

In short, the future, dark as it would surely prove to this girl, hitherto bred in luxury, was painted even blacker than it might prove in reality, and placed before her eyes. Poverty, a loss of friends, the sneers of purse-proud people—such thoughts were agonizing to a girl of Grace Ludlow’s sensitive pride, so she listened to the advice of those older and wiser (?) than herself, and hence, one brilliant October morning, found herself in bridal attire, soon to become the wife of Ralph Alroy.

It had all been so sudden. She had only met him in August at the Springs, and here in barely two months was to stand at the altar and speak the few words which would bind her for life. Somehow the thought stifled her, and she raised the window, threw back the heavy curtains, and leaning out inhaled one long breath of the brisk autumn air.

What a fair day! and only one year before life had looked as fair to her; yet the world was the same, and only her heart, soon to be blackened with a lie, the first she had ever uttered, had known a change. Alas! these officious friends who had driven her on to this step had given her a few moments for meditation ere the ceremony, and these are the thoughts that bring tears to her eyes, and cause head and heart to throb with sluggish pain.

Back flies memory to her happy girlhood, so soon to be left behind, and a pair of eyes

she loves looks down into hers as she rides over the hazy hills in the summer twilight.

“We are friends, Grace,” a gentle voice is saying, “good friends; and you, little one, are the only woman I have ever met who entirely pleases me. If things had been different in my life, and I felt in a position to marry, you are the woman I would have chosen for my wife.”

Flushed cheeks and tearful eyes assure him of her love, and he strokes his mustache in a self-satisfied way, and is conscious of a faint twinge of remorse that his “little friend” has really grown to care for him, and taken his nonsense for earnest. He has won her heart easily, Grace Ludlow confesses it with bitter self-contempt, and he scarcely values the conquest so readily gained.

He is what the world calls “not a marrying man,” a dangerous member of society to be at large, as matchmaking mammas with weeping sentimental daughters at home know to their cost, and Grace Ludlow is not the first girl whose heart has been gained in this way.

Yet Grace is different from these others, and where they have dried their tears, dutifully married the husbands plucked for them, and, as matrons, laughed at Grant Aubrey as “that absurd old bachelor whom they flirted with when girls,” she mourns over a shattered idol, and chafes at the chain which binds her.

He was wedded to his life, a life where clubs, champagne suppers and flirtations figured extensively, and his income was insufficient to support more than one in his luxurious hotel rooms; so marriage was declared a folly by this wise bachelor, and he kept on the even tenor of his way, playing well-worn tricks in flirtation, yet almost invariably trapping his silly victims, until he met Grace Ludlow.

At first he flirted, then grew interested, and even went so far as to calculate whether a fellow could give two evenings a week to a wife, and how much the old man (Grace’s father) would be likely to shell out if he should offer him the stupendous privilege of being his father-in-law. That was before he knew the desperate state of Mr. Ludlow’s finances. With wisest forethought he made inquiries, and finally decided to wind up the affair with Grace at once.

He had never committed himself, this honorable gentleman, and reflected upon

the fact with inward satisfaction; yet had not tender glances and a thousand gallant attentions spoken volumes to the girl whom he had been constantly with for a year past?

In spite of his resolutions, he is tempted this night, with Grace so near him, to speak more plainly, sacrifice his own comfort for once, and begin life as a respectable benedict.

Her face, clear-cut and dainty, is turned half towards him, and the softened splendor of the summer moon lightens dusky hair and eyes. Her pale cheek flushes at his very lover-like glances and tone.

"I always think, Gracie, of De Stael's description of herself when I look at you in this unearthly light: 'A soul of fire in a body of gossamer.' You are too dainty and *spirituelle* for this humdrum life; in short, too angelic for any man living. I hope you will never marry. I should die of jealousy."

She breaks from him in a sort of desperation, and he hardly knows the quiet passive girl of a few moments since. Nothing is said, but the scorn in her eyes might have shamed a less honorable man than Aubrey.

After that she had avoided him. In vain he sought opportunities for chats. A fashionable aunt soon came and whirled her off to Saratoga, where the great match was made, and Aubrey, upon his return from a leisurely trip up the St. Lawrence, learned the astounding fact that Grace was to be married in a month.

Her quiet face changed a little when he greeted her.

"Well, Gracie, so you've given me the mitten, have you?" Then, in a lugubrious tone, "What is to become of *me*?"

Grace's dark eyes looked bravely, even defiantly, into his.

"O, 'me' will be provided for, I've no doubt, while Grant Aubrey has brains and hands. I verily believe 'what is to become of me?' is the one problem of your life."

"Now you make me out a miserable egotist. That's not fair!"

A call from the door mercifully released her, and younger sisters entertained him with schoolgirl chatter, until he made his adieux.

Every day it was the same, until Grace was to be seen only by a few favored intimates.

So the romance, the very memory of which brought tears to her eyes upon her

wedding-morning, had begun, culminated and ended, and Aubrey, save for a queer sort of pain in his well-worn heart, had hardly given the wedding a thought. He was on hand at the wedding-breakfast, however, and was one of the first to congratulate the bride.

After the wedding things went on as usual at the Ludlow mansion, and a handsome present from Mr. Alroy's almost fabulous wealth quite restored Mr. Ludlow's business credit. Flo and Blanche took turns visiting at Grace's handsome home on the avenue, and Flo, as the eldest, had the privilege of attending ball and opera under her sister's protecting wing.

Here it always happened that Grant Aubrey met them, and "people," that vague oracle, began to whisper of a positive engagement this time between Flo Ludlow and Mr. Aubrey. He certainly appeared to be devotion itself, and attended closely upon the footsteps of this rather exacting young lady.

At times he would meet Grace's eyes with one of his old-time tender glances, and she, reading with woman's quick intuition this man's heart, would warn Flo against him. Girls of twenty are proverbially headstrong, and, in spite of Grace's endeavors, he kept closely beside them at watering-places and mountains.

Grace wisely avoided him as much as possible, and surely never man had a more exemplary or devoted wife than she proved to her rather exacting husband. There were thorns in her married life, but few, to see the elegant figure and smiling face of Mrs. Alroy, would have dreamed of the utter blackness of her existence, the terrible strain upon nerves and heart she daily underwent with the courage of a Spartan.

A woman either finds happiness or misery upon the day she becomes a wife, and to Grace, with a heart filled with an old romance, happiness had become impossible.

As an inexperienced girl she had planned her future. Knowing she could never love the man she was about to marry, she had yet prayerfully resolved to be a dutiful good wife; and, mistaking the dumb agony of her sleeping heart for indifference, she had decided that the love of her girlhood had been a myth, and that she, as a sensible woman, was capable of becoming a better wife than if she brought to Ralph Alroy a foolish exacting love. Thus with sophistry

do fashionable women silence the still small voice which bids them pause ere they wreck two lives by selling themselves for worldly gain.

Mr. Alroy was not a peculiar man, but typical of a class often met at summer resorts. Quiet, gentlemanly, despising fashion, yet always lingering in its glow, he had been a bachelor of forty-five, with a large fortune, and as yet untouched heart. We will not try to make a hero of the man, for he had some contemptible traits of character, and these perhaps will explain Grace's growing aversion, as she discovered after six months of married life that her dreams of future peace had been nothing but dreams, and being a wife meant in reality an intolerable slavery of even her most sacred thoughts and feelings to the man she must call master.

Pride, the only alloy in the pure gold of her nature, upheld her, and enabled her to appear the same graceful easy woman of the world to the many friends whom she had known before her marriage.

Mr. Alroy had admired upon his first meeting with Grace her style, beauty and perfect manners, and, having been on the search for just such an article for twenty years, he seized upon the first opportune moment to speak to Mr. Ludlow, and became the possessor of the beautiful girl he had wished to call his own.

He never dreamed of loving her; in fact, his fossilized heart would have scorned the idea as childish; but he was extremely selfish, this quiet gentleman, and watched with jealous eyes her every movement.

Never had Desdemona a more exacting lord, although this modern Othello took a very different way of showing his chagrin.

She was *his* wife. *He*, the man many a girl had sighed after in vain (at least he imagined such to be the case, and in his sublime egotism it would have been hopeless to have tried to undeceive him), had married this woman, the daughter of a man on the brink of bankruptcy, and could any sacrifices upon her part be too great to reward him for his generosity?

He did not love her, but she must love him with mingled awe and gratitude for his benevolence, else fail in her duty as a wife. In fact, in his eyes, their wedding had been something after the order of that of King Cophetua and the beggar maid; and this noble gentleman never hesitated to remind

his wife of the fact that but for him her family would be even now in poverty, and she probably a governess to the children of one of her devoted five hundred lady friends.

"It's all *my* money that makes you, Mrs. Alroy. Money is as necessary as the air we breathe, the open sesame to every pleasure of life. Money made me, and I have made you. What could you do but for the millions which back you, the wealth, remember, that we should both be very thankful for—and careful of."

This last was added cautiously, in fact he hardly dared as yet restrict his young wife in her girlish desires, but cunning and parsimony were written only too plainly in his keen gray eyes and narrow brow, and he inwardly calculated how long it would be ere he could lessen the rather small sum he now allowed her for her little expenses.

Grace was too miserable in her wounded pride and outraged dignity to notice this, however, and hurrying over her toilet, she joined Flo in the hotel parlors. She never complained to her sister, although the despicable traits in her husband's character and his daily increasing irritability rendered her wretched in the extreme.

How she loathed the rich dresses she wore, the diamond fetters upon her fingers, and even the food she forced herself to swallow, for had not *his* money bought them all?"

Yes, it had bought them and her.

Her eyes filled with tears. She leaned on the balustrade of the balcony, and listened with overflowing heart to the dreamy waltz music the band was playing on the lawn below. The delicious strains of the *Morgenblatter* reached her ears, and the throbbing pulse-beating measures of the music awoke memories of her happy girlhood. She saw herself, just one year before, floating down that very ballroom opposite, in Grant Aubrey's arms. She had never dreamed then but what she would one day marry him, yet here was she now bound for life to another, the wife of a man she was growing to *hate*! She whispered it only to herself with frightened, wide-opened eyes. She hated him, and would gladly have given back all his benefits to have been a free happy girl once more. What were the stings of poverty compared to this intolerable slavery, every day becoming more unbearable?

Just now some one has stopped beside her

chair, stopped a little hesitatingly as if uncertain of his ground. There is something beside pity in the worldly selfish face watching her every movement; for the heart its owner thought so secure has at last rebelled and Grace has won, unconsciously, the gift she once would have given her life for. He stands gazing at her, yet utters no word, and the tears falling fast now as she fancies herself unperceived, assure him of a fact he has long suspected, namely, that Ralph Alroy's wife is a very miserable woman. I am sorry to recount it, but a thrill of joy illumines his face as he makes the discovery; yet he loves her better than he has ever loved anything else in the whole course of his selfish life.

Something trembles on his lips, words whose utterance would have placed a wide gulf between them forever—when Flo, radiant in blue silk, comes behind and laughingly blindfolds Grace with her two small hands. She looks half curiously, as Grace rises, at her white fingers damp with her sister's tears, and is about to speak, when something in Grace's face stops her.

Grace starts visibly at Aubrey's presence, then controls herself and meets his scrutiny bravely. She reads pity in his glance, an angry flush mounts to her temples, and turning abruptly away she leaves them together.

October again, with its golden and russet woods, soft winds and balmy air. A splendid sunset is illumining the west, and Grace Alroy, home again after her wanderings, walks listlessly up and down a narrow path just above the river.

One year married, and how shall the happy day be celebrated? Rejoicings are to be made, so her relatives say, on the following day, and they, never dreaming how really miserable she is, have completed all the arrangements for a grand merry-making to last for a week or more at the old Hall. Tomorrow the whole place will resound with gay young voices, but to-day is her own, and solitude is very sweet to this bride of a year.

She is thinking of her beautiful home whose spires gleam in the distance through the scarlet trees; but they are not pleasant thoughts, as one could tell by the scornful lip and bitter smile.

Even here, she is not happy, though the old house has been theirs for years, for has

not Ralph Alroy's money bought and paid for it that it might not fall beneath the auctioneer's hammer? Ostensibly, it is still the home of the Ludlows, but in reality Grace knows that her husband owns every acre of the closely shaven lawn and picturesque woodlands.

Her relatives call him the very soul of generosity, only his wife knows the meanesses of his nature.

It is another galling link in the chain of utter dependence which binds her. She hears continually of this and that note he has endorsed for her father, of the business scrapes he, in his superior wisdom, has rescued Mr. Ludlow from (not always by the most honorable means as Grace has learned to her horror); and once—bitterest thought of all—he had even bought the family honor, for Mr. Ludlow, in a fit of desperation, had forged a check, and only his son-in-law's influence had saved him.

"Money will buy the law," he had said with a coarse laugh, "but this took a ticklish large amount, let me tell you, Grace, and if it hadn't been your father I wouldn't have shelled out one red cent. Family honor is worth something, though, and I wouldn't like it to be said I had married the daughter of a—"

He was going to say "thief," but the white desperate look in Grace's face stopped him.

With a sob of anguish she had left him, escaped from prying eyes, and taken refuge this beautiful day amid the waving trees just over the sparkling river. All around her looked so peaceful. The last rays of the sun bathed the waters below in glory, and on the opposite shore a little white town gleamed through the rosy purple. Here was rest. One leap down those steep cliffs into the quiet waves, and who would be the wiser? A few moments of agony, and then everlasting peace. She shuddered at the dreadful thought, knelt down and murmured an inarticulate prayer to be delivered from temptation.

A sigh aroused her. Some one had intruded upon her solitude and was close beside her. Grant Aubrey, still given by the short-sighted world to Flo, had been invited to Ludlow House, and was it strange that he, too, should wander to a spot where they had so often sat together?

Grace stared at him in dumb agony. She was beyond caring for anything now; she

did not even chide him when he fell at her feet and took her hand in his own. He was not a man of high principles, and it took but a few burning words to tell his story. She listened, yet scarcely heard, and as he went on he took her acquiescence as quite a matter of course.

"It is a sin, Grace, and you are as miserable as I am. You hate him and wish him dead a thousand times a day—the narrow-minded, jealous tyrant!"

"Hush!" in a dumb awed voice; "he is just behind you, Grant."

There he stood, the outraged husband, a patient listener to every word Aubrey had uttered. With all his faults he was no coward, and his eyes sparkled with jealous fury as he pointed a revolver at Aubrey, who stood speechless and unarmed before him.

With a fearful shriek Grace ran to the edge of the rocks, and for one brief instant stood poised there, the light of another world in her eyes; then, before either man, roused from their angry passions by her fearful peril could interfere, she had thrown herself forward and fell down the dizzy height into the peaceful waters beneath.

Hushed awed voices sounded about Ludlow House the next day, and light footsteps glided up and down the long corridor leading to the drawing-rooms. There in state reposed the bride of a year; her long glistening bridal robes half hiding the coffin wherein she was laid, and a peaceful smile, such as she had never worn during her short married life, illumining the beauty of her face. The wearied soul had found peace at last.

So ended what worldly minds had planned and carried out, and these kind relatives were thoughtful to the last.

They had ruined her life; yet to them was she indebted for little kindnesses even

after her death. Her father and aunts pressed affectionate kisses upon the marble brow. Grant Aubrey covered the grave with costliest flowers, and placed tuberose, her favorite blossoms, in the dark glossy hair, and to Ralph Alroy, her husband, was she indebted for a superb marble monument, pointing its slender spire to heaven, and bearing upon its pure white surface the words:

Sacred to the Memory of Grace, beloved Wife of Ralph Alroy.

Cut off in her youth and beauty, a cherished wife and beloved daughter, she died as she had lived, prayerfully trusting in Him who doeth all things well.

"Thy will, not ours, O Lord, be done."

Surely there are sermons in tombstones, and from this one could be preached a useful lesson. Grace faded from the lives she had sacrificed her own happiness to make glad. Her father's speculations succeeded, and he became a rich man once more; her sisters all married happily, and Flo became the wife of Grant Aubrey. She never guesses at the true story of her sister's death, and her husband is not the man to tell her.

He sometimes visits the cemetery, and a bitter smile crosses his lips as he reads the words over Grace Alroy's grave; but he makes it a point never to moralize, and does not care to reflect that, but for his criminal folly, that young form might even yet be radiant in life and happiness. Her relatives, who made the match, tell him that "it is the will of Providence;" and, although his better reason revolts and points at them as her murderers, he is far too guilty himself to openly accuse them.

So the great world goes on, and many a similar match will be made by officious relatives, even before poor Grace Alroy is forgotten in her silent grave.